

DMI - St. Eugene University

(Run by sisters of Daughters of Mary Immaculate and Collaborators)



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From the desk of

Dr. T. X. A. ANANTH, BBA, MSW, MBA, MPhil, PhD

President – University Council

Dear Student Teachers,

Greetings

On behalf of DMI – St. Eugene University, I welcome you to third semester of the fast track teacher training programme, 2015.

At this point, we at DMI – SEU need to thank the Lord Almighty for the strength we have gained to face the second year at IVDL with improved facilities and renewed energy. I am duty bound to express my gratitude for encouragement received from Rev. Fr. Dr. J. E. Arulraj, our Founder-Chancellor of DMI – St. Eugene University, for his moral support, the financial assistance and guidance.

These books form the learning materials for your course in the III Semester and supportive references which will help your teaching career. Each subject is mapped to the syllabus and discussed in detail for easy understanding of the texts. Our dedicated team works to create texts that will be an additional asset in your career as teaching faculty in your respective institutions.

I welcome each of you once again on behalf of our respected Chancellor, members of the faculty and on my own behalf to benefit from the programme and contribute effectively to serve Zambia to reach the level of development envisioned by the country's early freedom fighters and liberators during their years of struggle for independence. Your efforts will be appreciated in harnessing the natural resources to generate the financial wealth that will move Zambia forward in the eyes of the developed world.

It is our endeavour to help you all in building a modern Zambia, a country that is blessed with an abundance of human and natural resources. I wish you all the best there in your second year at IVDL.



Dr. T. X. A. ANANTH

President – University Council

TABLE OF CONTENT

S. NO.	TOPICS	PAGE NO.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">UNIT ONE: JUDGEMENT</p> <p>1.1. The meaning of judgement in a court of Law</p> <p>1.2. School examinations and judgement</p> <p>1.3. The Gospels and belief in the final judgement:</p> <p>1.3.1 People will be judged by Jesus according to their response to Him and their behaviour towards other people</p> <p>1.3.2. All nations will be judged and none will be favored</p> <p>1.3.4. The final judgment will come suddenly</p> <p>1.3.5. No one knows when the final judgment will come, but signs will precede its coming</p> <p>1.3.6. Those who have rejected Jesus and have refused to help suffering people will be punished Matthew 25:41-45.</p> <p>1.3.7. Different teachings about the final judgment in the light of the New Testament.</p> <p>1.3.8. Christian beliefs about God’s judgement affect the lives of Christians today.</p> <p>1.3.9. Hindu and Muslim ideas of how a person’s life is judged with Christian ideas of how Christ will judge people.</p> <p>Revision Questions</p>	8
2	<p style="text-align: center;">UNIT TWO: JESUS AND THE LAW</p> <p>2.1. Different attitudes in modern Zambia to school rules</p> <p>2.2. To traffic laws</p> <p>2.3. To other laws</p> <p>2.4. To lawyers</p> <p>2.5. The role of obedience to rules and laws in traditional Zambian society.</p>	47

	<p>2.6. Jesus' summary of the Old Testament law and the new commandment given.</p> <p>2.7. Jesus' teaching about the Old Testament law from the Sermon on the Mount</p> <p>2.8. The controversy between Jesus and some other Jews about observance of the Sabbath</p> <p>2.9. Jesus' teaching about the Old Testament Law in relation to the new Kingdom of God and how He expressed this teaching in his attitude of fasting</p> <p>2.10. Jesus' attitude to the law with his attitude to the Jewish traditions.</p> <p>2.11. The actions and teachings of Jesus in contradiction with the Pharisees' idea about ritual cleanliness.</p> <p>2.12. Proposition and defence of a Christian way of behaviour in those situations. Illustrate the role of laws in Christian churches in modern Zambia.</p> <p>2.13. What the Early Christians taught about Christian attitudes to law from the New Testament letters</p> <p>2.14. The importance of obeying religious laws for Hindus and for Muslims in Zambia.</p> <p>2.15. Outline the teaching of Zambian Humanism</p> <p>2.15.1. On national laws,</p> <p>2.15.2. On obedience to national laws,</p> <p>2.15.3. On discipline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contrasting legalism with self-discipline - Comparing the values of the four main religious traditions in Zambia, and Zambian Humanism, with these two attitudes. <p>Revision Questions</p>	
3	<p style="text-align: center;">UNIT THREE: PRAYER</p> <p>3.1. Various ideas about and practices of prayer in modern Zambia.</p> <p>3.2. Jesus' practice of private prayer from Luke's Gospel.</p>	86

	<p>3.3. The prayer Jesus taught to his disciples.</p> <p>3.4. The parables of the Friend at Midnight, the Widow and the Judge</p> <p>3.5. The Pharisee and the Tax collector: The cultural and religious situation to which each refers, and what it teaches about prayer.</p> <p>3.6. The teachings of Jesus about perseverance and faith in prayer.</p> <p>3.6.1 Different kinds of prayer in indigenous Zambian:</p> <p>3.6.2. Hindu</p> <p>3.6.3. Muslim and</p> <p>3.6.4. Christian religious traditions</p> <p>3.6.5. The nature and significance of prayer in each of these four religious traditions. A pattern of prayer for a Christian in modern Zambia.</p> <p>3.6.5.1. Indigenous Zambian</p> <p>3.6.5.2. Hindu</p> <p>3.6.5.3. Muslim</p> <p>3.6.5.1. Christian religious traditions</p> <p>Revision Questions</p>	
4	<p style="text-align: center;">UNIT FOUR: JESUS' ATTITUDE TO OTHER PEOPLE</p> <p>(Mathew 18: 15-35; Luke 4: 25-27; 5: 12-13 & 27-32; 6: 27-38; Luke 7: 1-10 & 36-50; 9: 49-55; 10: 29-37; 11: 30-32; 12: 57-59; 13: 28-30; 15: 1-10; 16: 19-31; 17: 1-4; 19: 1-10; 22: 47-51; 23: 33-34).</p> <p>4.1. Different attitudes towards other people, particularly the unpopular or despised, expressed in modern Zambia.</p> <p>4.2. Jesus' behaviour towards unpopular or despised people with the behaviour of his contemporaries among Jewish religious leaders.</p> <p>4.3. Jesus' parables</p> <p>4.3.1. The Unforgiving Servant</p>	128

	<p>4.3.2. The Money lender</p> <p>4.3.2. The Lost Sheep</p> <p>4.3.3. The Lost Coin</p> <p>4.3.4. The Good Samaritan</p> <p>4.3.5. The rich man and Lazarus</p> <p>4.4. The teachings of Jesus about forgiveness of other people</p> <p>4.5. Loving one's neighbour</p> <p>4.6. Judging other people.</p> <p>4.7. Jesus commends Gentiles for their faith and response to God's messengers.</p> <p>4.8. The Difference between Christian opposition to</p> <p>4.8.1. Evil behaviour</p> <p>4.8.2. Judging other people</p> <p>4.9. Jesus' teaching about love for enemies and tolerance</p> <p>4.10. How Jesus' attitudes towards other people can be followed in modern Zambia.</p> <p>4.11. Jesus' teaching on love, forgiveness and tolerance for all other people</p> <p>4.11.1 With the teachings of Zambian Humanism</p> <p>4.11.2. Zambian Tradition</p> <p>4.11.3.Hinduism</p> <p>4.11.4. Islam</p> <p>Revision Questions</p>	
5	<p style="text-align: center;">UNIT FIVE: JESUS AND FAMILY LIFE</p> <p>(Det. 24: 1-4; Mark 3: 20-21; 6: 1-4; 10: 2-12; Luke 2: 41-52; Luke 7: 15; 8: 19-21; 9: 42 & 59-62; 10: 38-42; 11: 27-28; Luke 12: 51-53; 14: 26; 15: 11-32; 18: 28-30; John 2: 1-5;</p>	166

<p>John 19: 25-27).</p> <p>5.1. Different attitudes to family life in traditional Zambian teaching</p> <p>5.2. Islam</p> <p>5.3. Hinduism</p> <p>5.4. Modern Zambia</p> <p>5.5. The Kingdom of God must be valued above loyalty to one's family.</p> <p>5.6. Jesus by his actions and his teachings sought to strengthen family life.</p> <p>5.7. The Christian community as the most important family for Christians.</p> <p>5.8. The Teachings of Jesus about marriage and divorce against the teachings of His contemporaries.</p> <p>5.9. Examples from modern Zambian life of loyalty to the Kingdom of God conflicting with family loyalty</p> <p>5.10. Christian behaviour in such cases with the behaviour of people loyal to one of the three other main religious traditions in Zambia.</p> <p>5.11. Factors in modern Zambia which damage family life and the Christian attitude.</p> <p>Revision Questions</p>	
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UNIT I

JUDGEMENT

(Mathew 13: 24-30; 13: 36-43 & 47-50; 25; 1-13 & 31-46; Mark 13: 32-37; Luke 3: 1-9 & 15-17; 10: 8-16; 12: 1-12; 12: 35-40; 13: 22-30; 16: 19-31; 17: 22-37; 21: 7-19; 21: 25-36; Acts 1: 6-8; 1 Corinthians 3: 10-15; 2 Peter 3: 3-14).

1.1. The meaning of judgement in a court of Law

A judgement is a decision by a court or other tribunal that resolves a controversy and determines the rights and obligations of the parties.

A judgment is the final part of a court case. A valid judgment resolves all the contested issues and terminates the lawsuit, since it is regarded as the court's official pronouncement of the law on the action that was pending before it. It states who wins the case and what remedies the winner is awarded. Remedies may include money damages, injunctive relief, or both. A judgment also signifies the end of the court's jurisdiction in the case. The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and most state rules of civil procedure allow appeals only from final judgments.

A judgment must be in writing and must clearly show that all the issues have been adjudicated. It must specifically indicate the parties for and against whom it is given. Monetary judgments must be definite, specified with certainty, and expressed in words rather than figures. Judgments affecting real property must contain an explicit description of the realty so that the land can easily be identified.

Once a court makes a judgment, it must be dated and docketed with the court administrator's office. Prior to modern computer databases, judgments were entered in a docket book, in alphabetic order, so that interested outsiders could have official notice of them. An index of judgments was prepared by the court administrator for record keeping and notification purposes. Most courts now record their judgments electronically and maintain computer docketing and index information. Though the means of storing the information are different, the basic process remains the same.

A court may amend its judgment to correct inaccuracies or ambiguities that might cause its actual intent to be misconstrued. Omissions, erroneous inclusions, and descriptions are correctable. However, persons who were not parties to the action cannot be brought into the lawsuit by an amended judgment. The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure allow a judgment to be amended by a motion served within ten days after the judgment is entered. State rules of civil procedure also permit amendment of a judgment.

Different types of judgments are made, based on the process the court uses to make the final decision. A judgment on the merits is a decision arrived at after the facts have been presented and the court has reached a final determination of which party is correct. For example, in a Negligence lawsuit that is tried to a jury, the final decision will result in a judgment on the merits.

1.2. School examinations are a kind of judgement

School examinations are a kind of judgment in terms of assessing if learning took place between the student and the teacher in the entire environment of the school. It helps see if the student grasped the content and if s/he able to use it. The general performance in the exam will give an indication if there was a problem on the teacher's or student's part. Exams are not just a test to see the performance of the student and the teacher; it also helps the school itself to do a self-evaluation.

The teacher serves as the judge to gage performance in school examinations, because s/he has been trained in the subject to understand the strength and weaknesses of the student.

1.3. The Gospels and belief in the final judgement:

1.3.1 People will be judged by Jesus according to their response to Him and their behaviour towards other people

Matthew 6:14:

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Matthew 7:15-23:

15 "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16 By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. 21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Matthew 7: 24-29

Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." 28 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, 29 because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Matthew 18: 21-35

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister

who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

22 Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

26 “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. 35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Matthew 25: 14-30; 31-46:

14 “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. 17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. 18 But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

19 “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

21 “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

22 “The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’

23 “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few

things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

24 "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

26 "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.'

28 "'So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. 29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. 30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

44 "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

45 "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' 46 "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

Luke: 19: 12-27:

11 While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near

Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. 12 He said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. 13 So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.'

14 "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

15 "He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.

16 "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.'

17 "'Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.'

18 "The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.'

19 "His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.'

20 "Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. 21 I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.'

22 "His master replied, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? 23 Why then didn't you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?'

24 "Then he said to those standing by, 'Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.'

25 "'Sir,' they said, 'he already has ten!' 26 "He replied, 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 27 But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.'"

John 12: 48: If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. 49 For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. 50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

1.3.2. All nations will be judged and none will be favored

Matthew 25: 31-36

In the broad program of divine dealings with the Gentiles, the sovereignty of God over creation is revealed in an unusual way. Although God in His sovereign grace has allowed Gentiles to

assume great power and in the words of Christ, “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled” (Luke 21:24), the consummation of this program inevitably brings the Gentiles before God for much-deserved divine judgment.

The history of the world has demonstrated that mankind is not judged once but many times. God has already exercised His judgment upon angels, Adam and Eve, and many particular judgments have fallen upon individuals, cities, and nations. In the flood of Noah the entire world was subject to disciplinary judgment. Towering above all judgments in history is the fact that Christ on the cross was judged as the sin bearer for mankind and that there Satan also was judged and defeated (John 16:11). Christians in this present age of grace also experience the disciplinary judgment of God (I Corinthians 11:32). Throughout the whole period of the tribulation and especially in the great tribulation judgment after judgment is poured out upon the world.

In this sequence the judgment of the nations assumes great significance and is one of the important milestones in divine dealing with a wicked world. That it is not the final judgment is evident, for other judgments will follow at the end of the millennium and the final judgment of all will be at the Great White Throne. The judgment of the nations, however, is important as bringing to a close one of the major phases of divine dealings, namely, the times of the Gentiles, and in a preliminary way anticipates the judgment of all unsaved men which will occur a thousand years later. The confusion which has arisen in the attempt to make this the judgment of all men, including both the resurrected and translated saints as well as the wicked, is corrected by careful attention to the exact text of Matthew 25:31-46 where the details of the judgment are given.

The Time Of The Judgment

The passage is introduced by a time clause indicating when the judgment will take place in the tremendous sequence of events related to the second coming: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory” (Matthew 25:31). The context indicates that this is the coming of Christ to the earth in connection with the establishment of His earthly kingdom. The judgment, therefore, is distinguished in time from judgments that relate to the judgment seat of Christ occurring in connection with the rapture of the church, and from all historic judgments that precede as well as the many judgments that are poured upon the earth during the great tribulation. It follows the second coming of Christ to the earth, and precedes and is a preparation for His reign on earth for a thousand years. Therefore it is also distinguished from any judgments on rebellion during His kingdom reign and from the final judgment of the Great White Throne at the end of the millennium.

The Place Of The Judgment

From the context it is also clear that the place of the judgment is earth, not heaven. The phrase, “the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him,” is a picture of Christ and the angels coming from heaven to the earth. This is substantiated by another time clause, “Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory” (Matthew 25:31). This is not the throne of God in

heaven, but rather the earthly throne predicted by the prophets. It is the beginning of the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jeremiah 23:5). The place of this judgment, therefore, is the millennial earth not heaven.

The Subjects Of The Judgment

In Matthew 25:32 the subjects of this divine judgment are clearly declared to be "all nations." The passage could be translated "all Gentiles" as the Greek word is *ethne*. This is a common word found frequently in the Bible and generally used of non-Jewish races. Although occasionally used of the Jews themselves (cp. Luke 7:5; 23:2; John 11:48, 50, 51, 52; 18:35; Acts 10:22; etc.), the more common meaning is to refer to Gentiles as distinguished from Jews, for instance in the references in Romans 11:13; 15:27; 16:4; Galatians 2:12. In some passages the Gentile character of the word is the main thought as in Romans 3:29; 9:24.

The context here indicates that the nations or the Gentiles should be viewed as the non-Jewish population of the world. In the narrative they are contrasted to "my brethren" (Matthew 25:40) who in the passage are distinguished from both the sheep and the goats, which comprise the entire mass of the Gentiles. In order to maintain the distinctions, it is best to understand it as referring to the non-Jewish peoples of the world. However, a similar judgment awaits the Jewish people (Ezekiel 20:34-38) and the issue is not whether both Jews and Gentiles are judged, but rather whether this passage concerns itself primarily with the Gentiles. In view of the fact that this is the climax of the times of the Gentiles, it seems appropriate that a special judgment should be applied to these who have oppressed Israel throughout their history.

From the English word nations some have inferred that what is dealt with here are political entities or countries as such. This is not at all indicated by the word "*ethne*", a racial rather than an organizational term, and the details of the prophecy are such that they can be applied only to individuals and not to groups. The expression "all nations" therefore is best understood as referring to all Gentiles and more specifically all Gentiles who are living on earth at this time. It should be understood that many Gentiles at the time of the second coming of Christ were also already judged in the very act of divine wrath being poured on the armies gathered in the Middle East according to Revelation 19:17-21. As this is an earlier event in connection with the second advent, it must be assumed that we have here living Gentiles who were non-combatants or not involved in this great struggle.

The Basis Of The Judgment

This passage in Matthew 25 is a remarkable one in that works are prominent. According to the Scriptures, as all Gentiles are gathered before Christ to be judged they are divided into two classes, one described as "sheep" and the other designated "goats." According to Matthew 25:33, "he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." Having made this arbitrary division, He then justifies what He is doing by addressing Himself first to the sheep. In graphic

language Christ in His role as “the King” declares to the sheep on his right hand: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was a hungry, and you gave me meat: I was thirsty, and you gave me drink: I was a stranger, and you took me in: Naked, and you clothed me: I was sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came unto me” (Matthew 25:34-36).

The declaration by Christ is remarkable because attention is called to certain rather ordinary works such as feeding the hungry, giving the thirsty drink, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and those in prison. Furthermore, Christ declares that they who have done these things have done them to Him personally.

The righteous accordingly answer Him with the question, “Lord, when did we see you hungry, and fed you? or thirsty, and gave you drink? When did we see you a stranger, and took you in? or naked, and clothed you? Or when did we see you sick, or in prison, and came to you?” (Matthew 25:37-39). In reply Christ as “the King” states, “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40).

In contrast to this, Christ then turns to those on the left hand described as goats and declares, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was hungry, and you gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and you took me not in: naked, and you clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and you visited me not” (Matthew 25:41-43). In like manner the goats replied asking when they had neglected these works of mercy. The judgment then is pronounced upon the goats by Christ, “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal” (Matthew 25:45, 46).

This passage has troubled expositors for it seems to indicate that the sheep go into life eternal because of their righteous works whereas the wicked are condemned because of their failure to do these prescribed deeds of kindness. The question is naturally raised whether a person can be saved by works. If any passage in the Bible seems to imply it, this would be the passage.

When other Scriptures are brought to bear upon the question of whether people can be saved by works, it soon becomes evident that salvation by works is an impossibility under any circumstances. Although grace may be revealed in different degrees in different dispensations, it is evident from the very doctrine that all men are sinners, that all men are spiritually dead, and that no amount of good works can reverse the sentence of death or change the sinful nature of man. Works can never be the ground of man’s salvation. There can be no cure for depravity, Adamic sin, and obvious human failure found in every life, other than the grace of God. Hence, while there may be different dispensations with varying rules of life there can be only one way of salvation, namely, through Christ and His provided redemption. The question remains then how this passage in its plain emphasis on works can be justified.

The answer is first of all found in the fact that in every dispensation works are not the ground of salvation, but rather they are the evidence of salvation. It is always true that “faith without works

is dead” (James 2:26). This does not mean that a man is saved by works, but it does mean that one who really trusts God and is the recipient of divine grace will manifest this fact in a changed life. Humanly speaking, it is proper to challenge faith that does not manifest itself in some way. The passage then should be added to all others that emphasize the importance of works, not as the basis for salvation, but as the evidence of it.

A question still remains, however, concerning the precise character of these works. Is it always true that those who are kind to others and feed them and clothe them are necessarily Christians? The obvious philanthropy of many non-Christians in our modern world would seem to indicate that this cannot be taken normally as an indisputable evidence of eternal life.

The answer to the problem is found in the peculiar circumstances which form the background of the judgment. The people who are here being judged as Gentiles are those who have survived the horrors of the great tribulation. In this period which Jeremiah refers to as “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7), anti-semitism will reach an all-time high. It is evident from the warning of Christ in Matthew 24:15-22 that the Jewish people will be hounded to the death especially in the Holy Land, and possibly throughout the world. Satanic hatred will be manifested to a degree never before achieved and will be part of the world-wide satanic deception which will cause men to believe a lie. In the words of II Thessalonians 2:11, “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.”

Under these peculiar circumstances, under the strain and stress of satanic hatred of God and compulsion to worship the world ruler, anyone who would befriend a Jew would be a marked man. It is almost inconceivable that one who would be a true worshiper of the beast would ignore the world-wide command to exterminate the Jew. For a Gentile under these circumstances to befriend one who is designated as “my brethren” would be phenomenal and could be motivated only by a realization that the Jewish people are indeed the people of God and that their Messiah is indeed the Saviour of all who believe in Him. A simple work of kindness such as is here described therefore becomes highly significant, and in the context of this judgment one who would perform deeds of kindness would inevitably be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, while the works are not the ground of their salvation, which inevitably must be the grace of God and the sacrifice of Christ, works are nevertheless the evidence of salvation and to this our Lord points.

It is still true that salvation is “not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:9) but rather by faith and by grace.

The importance of works in the final judgments of mankind here has another divine revelation. The sheep who have manifested their faith in Christ under trying circumstances by befriending a Jew are now rewarded by being ushered into the millennial kingdom with its blessings of Christ’s righteous rule and beneficent care over all who trust in Him. By contrast, the goats who followed the course of this world and undoubtedly participated in the persecution of the Jewish people as well as neglecting their acts of kindness now come under the divine judgment which they justly deserve, and are cast into everlasting fire.

The Judgment

The purpose of the judgment of the Gentiles is obviously one of separation of the righteous from the unrighteous in preparation for the millennial kingdom (cp. Matthew 24:40, 41). It is a fulfillment of that which was anticipated in the parables of Matthew 13 where it was predicted that in the end the wheat and the tares would be separated, the good and the bad fish would be dealt with, and the bad fish destroyed. The millennial kingdom will begin with the entire adult population of the world limited to those who have put their trust in Christ. It will be a new beginning comparable to that following the flood when Noah and his immediate family formed the entire population of the earth.

From this context it is also evident that this is not a final judgment of the individuals concerned. Those ushered into the millennial kingdom in this judgment still are in their natural bodies, still have a natural life to live, and ultimately will either die or be translated and have their life reviewed in finality. Although there is no specific revelation of this fact, the general truth of Hebrews 9:27, "as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment," it may be concluded that the sheep will be subject to ultimate reward for their works even though at this time they are assured of eternal salvation in that they possess eternal life. In a similar way the casting of the wicked into everlasting fire should not be confused as a final judgment in which they are cast into the lake of fire which does not occur for another thousand years. It is rather that they move into a state of divine judgment described by the word "everlasting fire" such as is true both in Hades, the temporary abode of the wicked dead, and the lake of fire, the final state of the wicked. Their judgment in a word is that they are put to death physically, but subject to future judgment and final resurrection at the Great White Throne judgment. This judgment accordingly ends the times of the Gentiles and begins the millennial rule of Christ.

1.3.3. Everyone should always be prepared for it

Matthew 7:21-23:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"

Matthew 12: 36:But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. 37 For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

John 12: 48:If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. 49 For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. 50 I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

Acts 17: 30, 31: In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

Romans 14:10,12:10 You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat. 11 It is written:

“‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God.’”

12 So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

2 Corinthians 5:10: For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Revelation 20:11-13: Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done.

1.3.4. The final judgment will come suddenly

We do not know when the Second Coming will occur. Jesus said, "As to the exact day or hour, no one knows it, neither the angels in heaven nor even the Son, but only the Father. Be constantly on the watch! Stay awake! You do not know when the appointed time will come" (Mk 13:32-33).

St. Peter predicts, "The day of the Lord will come like a thief and on that day the heavens will vanish with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire and the earth and all its deeds will be made manifest" (2 Pt 3:10).

1.3.5. No one knows when it will come, but signs will precede its coming

various signs would mark the event. Mankind would suffer from famine, pestilence and natural disasters. False prophets who claim to be the Messiah will deceive and mislead people. Nations will wage war against each other. The Church will endure persecution. Worse yet, the faith of many will grow cold and they will abandon the faith, even betraying and hating one another. (Confer Mt. 24:4-14; Lk 17:22-37) St. Paul describes a "mass apostasy" before the Second Coming, which will be led by the "son of perdition," the "Man of Lawlessness," the "adversary who exalts himself above every so-called god proposed for worship." This "lawless one" is part of the work of Satan, and with power, signs, wonders and seductions will bring to ruin those who have turned from the truth. However, "the Lord Jesus will destroy him with the breath of His

mouth and annihilate him by manifesting His own presence." (Cf. 2 Thes 2:3-12)

1.3.6. Those who have rejected Jesus and have refused to help suffering people will be punished Matthew 25:41-45.

Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

44 "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

45 "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

1.3.7. Assess different teachings about the final judgement in the light of the New Testament.

The truth about the judgement is found throughout the New Testament as evidenced in the following passages:

"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" (Matt. 3:7 and Luke 3:7)

"...every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." (Matt. 3:10)□□

"His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3:12)□□

"But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother [Some manuscripts brother without cause] will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,[An Aramaic term of contempt] ' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell." (Matt. 5:22)□□

"If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell." (Matt. 5:29-30)□□

" Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." (Matt. 7:1)

□□ "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it." (Matt. 7:13)

□□ "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." (Matt. 7:19)□□

"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10:28)□□

"But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned." (Matt. 12:36-37)□□

"As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age." (Matt. 13:40)

□□ "If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell." (Matt. 18:8-9)

□□ "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart." (Matthew 18:32-35)□□

"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Therefore you will be punished more severely." (Matthew 23:14)

□□ "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?" (Matt. 23:33)□□

"Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 25:28-30)

□□ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. □ Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you

clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'
 Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'
 The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'
 Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'
 They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'
 He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'
 Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." (Matt. 25:31-46)

" And if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched. Everyone will be salted with fire.'" (Mark 9:42-49)

As he taught, Jesus said, "Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted in the marketplaces, and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely." (Mark 12:38-40)

" Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16)

" The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." (Luke 3:9)

" His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Luke 3:17)

" But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him." (Luke 12:5)

" The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers. That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows." (Luke 12:46-48)

□□ "I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish... I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish." (Luke 13:3-5)□□

"In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'" (Luke 16:23-24)

□□ Jesus said to his disciples: "Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. So watch yourselves." (Luke 17:1-3)□□

"Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. On that day no one who is on the roof of his house, with his goods inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. Remember Lot's wife! Whoever tries to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it. (Luke 17:26-33)

□□ "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled." (Luke 21:20-24)□□

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." (John 3:16-18)

□□ "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." (John 3:36)

□□ "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life." (John 5:24)

□□ "And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out--

those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned." (John 5:27-29)

□□ " I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand." (John 10:28)□□

" As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day." (John 12:47-48)□□

" If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned." (John 15:6)□□

" When he [the Holy Spirit] comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8)

□□ Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you: □ 'Look, you scoffers, wonder and perish, □ for I am going to do something in your days □ that you would never believe, □ even if someone told you.' (Acts 13:40-41)□□

" For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed." (Acts 17:31)□□

As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you." (Acts 24:25)□□

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. God 'will give to each person according to what he has done. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. (Romans 2:1-8)□□

For God does not show favoritism. All who sin apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who sin under the law will be judged by the law. (Romans 2:11-12)□□

This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares. (Romans 2:16)□□

But if our unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on us? (I am using a human argument.) Certainly not! If that were so, how could God judge the world? Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?" Why not say--as we are being slanderously reported as saying and as some claim that we say--"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is deserved. (Romans 3:5-8)□□

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. (Romans 3:19)□□

because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression. (Romans 4:15)□□

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (Romans 5:9)□□

Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation...just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men... (Romans 5:16-18)□□

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus... (Romans 8:1)□□

Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay,"[12:19 Deut. 32:35] says the Lord. (Romans 12:19)□□

You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. (Romans 14:10)□□

So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. (Romans 14:12)

□□It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall. So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves. But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin. (Romans 14:21-23)

□□For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Cor. 1:18)

□□What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. (1 Cor. 5:12-13)□□

For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. (1 Cor. 11:29)□□

When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world. (1 Cor. 11:32)

□□For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. (2 Cor. 2:15-16)

□□And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2 Cor. 4:3-4)□□

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. (2 Cor. 5:10-11)□□

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! (Galatians 1:8-9)

□□The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. (Galatians 6:8)□□

All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. (Eph. 2:3)□□

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. (Eph. 5:6)

□□...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, (Phil. 2:12)□□

For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction.... (Phil. 3:18-20)□□

Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. (Col. 3:6)

□□...and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. (1 Thess. 1:10)□□

It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. (1 Thess. 4:3-6)□□

For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. 5:9)□□

God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power (2 Thess. 1:6-9)□□

The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness. (2 Thess. 2:9-12)

□□As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. (1 Tim. 5:11-12)□□

The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them. (1 Tim. 5:24)

□□In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom,... (2 Tim. 4:1)□□

Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him. You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned. (Titus 3:10-11)□□

For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? (Hebrews 2:2-3)□□

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:12-13)□□

Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. (Heb. 6:1-2)□□

Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,... (Heb. 9:27)□□

If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb. 10:26-31)

□□By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. (Hebrews 11:7)□□

You have come to God, the judge of all men (Hebrews 12:23)□□

for our "God is a consuming fire." [12:29 Deut. 4:24] (Hebrews 12:29)□□

Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. (Hebrews 13:4)□□

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. (Hebrews 13:17)□□

But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. (James 2:9)□□

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment! (James 2:12-13)□□

we who teach will be judged more strictly. (James 3:1)□□

There is only one Lawgiver and Judge (James 4:12)□□

Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. (James 5:3)□□

Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! (James 5:9)□□

Above all, my brothers, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No," no, or you will be condemned. (James 5:12)□□

Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. (1 Peter 1:17)□□

Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. (1 Peter 2:17)□□

But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. (1 Peter 4:5)

□□For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? (1 Peter 4:17)□□

In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping. For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)-- if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment. (2 Peter 2:3-9)

□□But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish. They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. (2 Peter 2:12-13)□□

By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. (2 Peter 3:7)□□

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)□□

His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. (2 Peter 3:16)□□

For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord. Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home--these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. (Jude 1:4-7)□□

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of

all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 1:14-15)□□

snatch others from the fire and save them; (Jude 1:23)□□

In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. (1 John 4:17)□□

They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" (Rev. 6:10)□□

They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?" (Rev. 6:16-17)□□

The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great— and for destroying those who destroy the earth. (Rev. 11:18)□□

He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come...A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name." (Rev. 14:7-11)□□

The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath. (Rev. 14:19)□□

" Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed." (Rev. 15:4)□□

seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God (Rev. 15:7)

□□Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth." (Rev. 16:1)□□

" Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you." (Rev. 18:20)□□

Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!" (Rev. 19:5)□□

Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." [Psalm 2:9] He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. (Rev. 19:15) □ □

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:11-15)

1.3.8. Show how Christian beliefs about God's judgement affect the lives of Christians today.

A central theme of many religions and Christianity in particular is what happens to people upon death. Almost all religions are greatly devoted to the afterlife, emphasizing that what you do in your current life effects what happens to you in the afterlife. This usually takes the form of judgement by a deity, in which ones deeds and characteristics in life determine either punishment or reward.

One of the prominent doctrines of the New Testament is the Doctrine of Rewards and the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is a doctrine often ignored or, when taught, it is misrepresented because of the term "judgment" that is used in translating the Greek text. Commenting on this Samuel Hoyt writes:

Within the church today there exists considerable confusion and debate regarding the exact nature of the examination at the judgment seat of Christ. The expression "the judgment seat of Christ" in the English Bible has tended to cause some to draw the wrong conclusion about the nature and purpose of this evaluation. A common misconception which arises from this English translation is that God will mete out a just retribution for sins in the believer's life, and some measure of retributive punishment for sins will result.

As it will be shown below, though it is tremendously serious with eternal ramifications, the judgment seat of Christ is not a place and time when the Lord will mete out punishment for sins committed by the child of God. Rather, it is a place where rewards will be given or lost depending on how one has used his or her life for the Lord.

In 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20, the Apostle Paul drew courage and was motivated by the fact of rewards at the return of the Lord for the church which he mentions in every chapter in this epistle and becomes the primary subject of 2 Thessalonians. The Lord's return and what this means not only to the world but to us individually is a very prominent subject of the New Testament.

It is significant that among the final words of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, we find these words of the Lord:

Rev. 22:12 Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.

While salvation is a gift, there are rewards given for faithfulness in the Christian life and loss of rewards for unfaithfulness. Rewards become one of the great motives of the Christian's life or should. But we need to understand the nature of these rewards to understand the nature of the motivation. Some people are troubled by the doctrine of rewards because this seems to suggest "merit" instead of "grace," and because, it is pointed out, we should only serve the Lord out of love and for God's glory.

Of course we should serve the Lord out of love and for God's glory, and understanding the nature of rewards will help us do that. But the fact still remains that the Bible promises us rewards. God gives us salvation. It is a gift through faith, but He rewards us for good works. God graciously supplies the means by which we may serve Him. Indeed, He works in us both to will and to do as we volitionally appropriate His grace (Phil. 2:12-13), but the decision to serve, and the diligence employed in doing so, are our responsibility and our contribution and God sees this as rewardable. Compare the following passages:

1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

Colossians 1:29 And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

Key Verses on Rewards: Rom. 14:10-11; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:9-10; 1 John 2:28; Rev. 3:11-12.

The Meaning of the □Judgment (Bema) Seat

Both Romans 14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:9 speak of the "judgment seat." This is a translation of one Greek word, the word bema. While bema is used in the gospels and Acts of the raised platform where a Roman magistrate or ruler sat to make decisions and pass sentence (Matt. 27:19; John 19:13), its use in the epistles by Paul, because of his many allusions to the Greek athletic contests, is more in keeping with its original use among the Greeks.

This word was taken from Isthmian games where the contestants would compete for the prize under the careful scrutiny of judges who would make sure that every rule of the contest was obeyed (cf. 2 Tim. 2:5). The victor of a given event who participated according to the rules was led by the judge to the platform called the Bema. There the laurel wreath was placed on his head as a symbol of victory (cf. 1 Cor. 9:24-25).

In all of these passages, "Paul was picturing the believer as a competitor in a spiritual contest. As

the victorious Grecian athlete appeared before the Bema to receive his perishable award, so the Christian will appear before Christ's Bema to receive his imperishable award. The judge at the Bema bestowed rewards to the victors. He did not whip the losers." We might add, neither did he sentence them to hard labor.

In other words, it is a reward seat and portrays a time of rewards or loss of rewards following examination, but it is not a time of punishment where believers are judged for their sins. Such would be inconsistent with the finished work of Christ on the Cross because He totally paid the penalty for our sins. Chafer and Walvoord have an excellent word on this view:

With reference to sin, Scripture teaches that the child of God under grace shall not come into judgment (John 3:18; 5:24; 6:37; Rom. 5:1; 8:1; 1 Cor. 11:32); in his standing before God, and on the ground that the penalty for all sin—past, present, and future (Col. 2:13)—has been borne by Christ as the perfect Substitute, the believer is not only placed beyond condemnation, but being in Christ is accepted in the perfection of Christ (1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:6; Col. 2:10; Heb. 10:14) and loved of God as Christ is loved (John 17:23).

Again, Chafer writes concerning the Bema, "It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the judgment is unrelated to the problem of sin, that it is more for the bestowing of rewards than the rejection of failure."

The Time of the Bema

This event will occur immediately following the rapture or resurrection of the church after it is caught up to be with the Lord in the air as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

Arguments in support of this view:

(1) In Luke 14:12-14, reward is associated with the resurrection and the rapture is when the church is resurrected.

(2) In Revelation 19:8, when the Lord returns with His bride at the end of the tribulation, she is seen already rewarded. Her reward is described as fine linen, the righteous acts of the saints—undoubtedly the result of rewards.

(3) In 2 Timothy 4:8 and 1 Corinthians 4:5, rewards are associated with "that day" and with the Lord's coming. Again, for the church this means the event of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

So the order of events will be (a) the rapture which includes our glorification or resurrection bodies, (b) exaltation into the heavens with the Lord, (c) examination before the Bema, and (d) compensation or rewards.

The Place of the Bema

It will occur somewhere in the heavenlies in the presence of the Lord. This is evident from 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and Revelation 4:2 and 19:8.

The Participants at the Bema

(1) All the passages dealing with the Bema or rewards are addressed to believers or pertain to believers of the church (Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:12f; 2 Cor. 5:9f; 1 John 2:28; 1 Thess. 2:19-20; 1 Tim. 6:18-19; Tit. 2:12-14 [note the emphasis on good works]).

The resurrection program and the thus the reward of Old Testament saints occurs after the tribulation, after church age saints are already seen in heaven and rewarded and returning with the Lord to judge the earth (cf. Rev. 19:8 with Dan. 12:1-2; Matt. 24).

(2) All believers, regardless of their spiritual state, will be raptured and will stand before the Bema to give an account of their lives and will either receive rewards or lose rewards. Some believe in a partial rapture theory which says that only those in fellowship with the Lord will be raptured as a form of punishment for their sin. As mentioned above, this is not only contrary to the finished work of Christ who once and for all paid the penalty for our sins, but it is contrary to the teaching of 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11.

9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him.

The context suggests that Paul has in mind the return of Christ for the church—the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18). The rapture is the means of our deliverance from the wrath he discusses in chapter 5:1-3. Further, the words “awake or asleep” of verse 10 refer to a spiritual or moral condition, not whether one is alive or dead when Christ returns as in 4:13-14. This is clear from both the context of 5:4-8 and by the fact he changed the words he used for sleep. He used the Greek *katheudo* in 5:10 rather than *koimao*, the word he used metaphorically in 4:13-14 of physical death. Though *katheudo* was used of physical sleep and even death, it was also commonly used of spiritual apathy or carnal indifference to spiritual matters, and this is clearly the context of chapter 5. The point, then, is this: Because of the perfect and finished nature of Christ’s death (note the words “who died for us” of verse 10), whether we are spiritually alert or not, we will live together with Him through the rapture to face the examination of the Bema.

The Examiner or Judge at the Bema

This is none other than the Lord Jesus who is even now examining our lives and will bring to light the true nature of our walk and works when we stand before Him at the Bema (Rev. 1-2; 1 Cor. 4:5f; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 John 2:28). In Romans 14:10 the Apostle called this examining time the

Bema of God while in 2 Corinthians 5:10 he called it the Bema of Christ. The Point: Jesus who is God is our examiner and rewarder.

The Purpose and Basis of the Bema

The purpose and the basis is the most critical issue of all and brings us face to face with the practical aspects of the Bema. Some crucial questions are: Why are we brought before the Bema? Is it only for rewards or their loss? Will any punishment be meted out? Will there be great sorrow? What's the basis on which the Bema is conducted? Is it sin, good works, or just what?

THE PROBLEM

Within the church, there exists a good deal of confusion and disagreement concerning the exact nature of the Bema. The use of the term "judgment seat" in most translations, ignorance of the historical and cultural background concerning the Bema, and foggy theology regarding the finished work of Christ have all contributed to several common misconceptions which, in one way or another, see God as giving out just retribution to believers for sin, or at least for our unconfessed sin.

THREE VIEWS OF THE BEMA

For a summary of three major views, let me quote Samuel L. Hoyt from *Bibliotheca Sacra*.

Some Bible teachers view the judgment seat as a place of intense sorrow, a place of terror, and a place where Christ display all the believer's sins (or at least those unconfessed) before the entire resurrected and raptured church. Some go even further by stating that Christians must experience some sort of suffering for their sins at the time of this examination.

At the other end of the spectrum another group, which holds to the same eschatological chronology, views this event as an awards ceremony. Awards are handed out to every Christian. The result of this judgment will be that each Christian will be grateful for the reward which he receives, and he will have little or no shame.

Other Bible teachers espouse a mediating position. They maintain the seriousness of the examination and yet emphasize the commendation aspect of the judgment seat. They emphasize the importance and necessity of faithful living today but reject any thought of forensic punishment at the Bema. Emphasis is placed on the fact that each Christian must give an account of his life before the omniscient and holy Christ. All that was done through the energy of the flesh will be regarded as worthless for reward, while all that was done in the power of the Holy Spirit will be graciously rewarded. Those who hold this view believe that the Christian will stand glorified before Christ without his old sin nature. He will, likewise, be without guilt because he has been declared righteous. There will be no need for forensic punishment, for Christ has forever borne all of God's wrath toward the believer's sins.

This last view I believe to be the one that is in accord with Scripture. Reasons for this will be set forth and developed as we study the nature, purpose, and basis for the Bema. But for now, lest we draw some wrong conclusions, we need to be ever mindful that God's Word clearly teaches there are specific and very serious consequences, both temporal and eternal, for sin or disobedience. Though we will not be judged in the sense of punished for sin at the Bema since the Lord has born that for us, we must never take sin lightly because there are many consequences.

THE PRESENT CONSEQUENCES OF SIN OR DISOBEDIENCE

While the following is not exhaustive, it demonstrates that sin in the life of a believer is not a small issue.

(1) Loss of Fellowship With the Lord. Known sin in one's life causes a loss of intimate fellowship with the Lord with the consequent loss of His joy and peace (Ps. 32:3-4).

(2) Divine Discipline From the Lord Here in Time. We should not think of discipline as punishment. Discipline from God is the gracious work of a Father to train and develop His children. Sometimes this comes in the form of various kinds of testing, trials, failure, and predicaments which He uses to correct us, to train us, and, if we have been going our own stubborn way, to increase our misery. The goal, however, is always to bring us back to Him (Heb. 12:5-11). If the believer remains unrepentant, this can lead to the sin unto death as with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), and some of the believers at Corinth who were failing to confess their sin and get right with the Lord (1 Cor. 11:28f; cf. also 1 John 5:16-17).

(3) Loss of Power and Production. When we fail to deal with our sinful ways through honest confession, we grieve the Spirit's person and quench His power in our lives. This means that rather than operating by faith in God's provision, we end up operating in the energy of the flesh. We turn to our personal bag of tricks by which we seek to handle life (Gal. 3:1-5; 5:5-15; Jer. 2:12-13). This results in the works of the flesh and their awful and fruitless consequences (Gal. 5:19-21, 26). Without the abiding life, the life of faith and obedience to the Savior, we can do nothing (John 15:1-7).

(4) Loss of Opportunities. When we are in charge of our lives rather than the Lord, we become insensitive to people and opportunities of ministry—we lack vision. Carnal believers have no vision other than their own personal agendas and selfish goals (cf. Jn. 4:34f).

(5) Loss of Desire and Motivation for Service. Carnal believers are occupied and controlled by their own self-centered desires (Gal. 5:16f). Perhaps this is a good place to discuss the concept of selfishness and rewards for some see an appeal to rewards as selfish and therefore carnal.

Zane Hodges has some good thoughts on this concept:

Scripture does not teach us to be uninterested in our own happiness or well-being. The very desire to escape eternal damnation is a legitimate and urgent self-interest. The instinct to preserve our lives is the same. Nor are pleasure and enjoyment illegitimate experiences.

When God put Adam and Eve in the garden, He furnished them with “every tree ... that is pleasant to the sight and good for food” (Gen. 2:9). They could enjoy themselves freely provided they abstained from eating from the one forbidden tree. Similarly, Paul tells rich people that “God ... gives us richly all things to enjoy.” (1 Tim. 6:17).

Selfishness ought not to be defined simply as the pursuit of our own self-interest. Instead, it should be defined as the pursuit of our self-interest in our own way, rather than in God’s way. Since “love” is a preeminent virtue in Christianity, true selfishness often involves a pursuit of self-interest that violates the law of love.

Self-interest in God’s way is legitimate. Self-centeredness or selfishness is preoccupation with self at the expense of others and God’s will in one’s life. When Adam and Eve chose to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they acted in self-centered independence which was idolatry and sin. When they enjoyed each other and the fruit trees and blessings of the garden, they acted in their self-interest but they did so in dependence on and in obedience to the Lord.

(6) Broken Relationships and Disharmony. Carnality causes broken relationships and pain to those around us—our families, friends, associates, and co-workers in the body of Christ (Gal. 5:15; Heb. 12:15b).

(7) Loss of Physical Health and Vitality. Of course all sickness, weakness, or suffering is not a product of sin, but it can be and often is (1 Cor. 11:29-30; 1 John 5:16-17; Prov. 17:22; 14:30).

(8) Loss of Rewards at the Bema. 1 Cor 13:13-15: “each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man’s work. 14 If any man’s work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man’s work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire .”

THE PURPOSE OF THE BEMA

It is not punitive. It is not to judge believers for sin of any kind, confessed or unconfessed. “Scripture teaches that for the believer God’s justice has already been fully and forever satisfied at the Cross in relation to the believer’s sins. If God were to punish the believer judicially for his sins for which Christ has already rendered payment, He would be requiring two payments for sin and would therefore be unjust. Such a concept (punishment for sin) erroneously disparages the all-sufficiency of Christ’s death on the cross.” Christ paid the penalty for the believer’s pre- and post-conversion sins. The believer will forfeit rewards which he could have received, but he will not be punished in the judicial sense of “paying” for his sins.

Scripture teaches that all sins, both confessed and unconfessed, have been forgiven and taken care of by the work of Christ on the Cross so the Christian will never face those sins again at the judgment.

The following verses demonstrate the basic principle of the complete and finished nature of Christ's work:

Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Romans 5:19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

Colossians 2:10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;

These verses state the complete results or conclusion:

Hebrews 8:12 For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And I will remember their sins no more.

Hebrews 10:17-18 And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more. 18 Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Isaiah 44:22 I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud, And your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.

Psalms 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Micah 7:19 He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, Thou wilt cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea.

Isaiah 38:17 Lo, for my own welfare I had great bitterness; It is Thou who hast kept my soul from the pit of nothingness, For Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back.

These verses show we cannot come into judgment. Why? Because Christ has born our judgment by being made a curse in our place:

Romans 5:1 Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

John 3:18 He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 5:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

Then why do we have to confess sin in this life? And why does God judge believers for unconfessed sin as with Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 and some of the believers in Corinth in 1 Corinthians 11:28f? Because this is a completely different matter.

(1) Unconfessed sin relates to fellowship in this life, not one's relationship or standing with God. Unconfessed sin stands as a barrier to fellowship with the Lord and His control over one's life. As Amos 3:3 says, "can two walk together unless they be agreed?" Obviously the answer is no. Confession means we agree with God concerning our sin and want to get back under God's control. "Daily forgiveness of those who are within the family of God is distinguished from judicial and positional forgiveness which was applied forensically to all of a person's sins the moment he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ." We need to distinguish between fellowship forgiveness and legal or forensic forgiveness that justifies us and gives us a standing before God through Christ.

Key Scriptures: Heb. 12:5f and 1 Cor. 11:28-32. These passages:

- Explain the nature of God's judgment of believers in this life. It is discipline designed to train and bring believers back to a walk with God.
- They teach us the basic cause of discipline is failure to examine and confess known sins because that hinders our fellowship with God.
- "Condemned along with the world" in 1 Corinthians 11:32 most likely refers to the judgment of Rom. 1:24f, moral degeneration and the gradual breakdown in the moral fiber of men when they turn away from God. The same thing happens in the life of believers, but God brings discipline to stop the process.

(2) God does not judge us for our sin in the sense of making us pay the penalty for that sin.

Scripture teaches that Christ's death was all-sufficient, completely satisfying God's wrath toward sin in the believer. The question of sin in regard to God's justice has been forever satisfied in the mind of God by the all-sufficient sacrifice of His Son. The penalty for the believer's sins has been fully paid for by Christ, the believer's substitute. The Christian has been in court, condemned, sentenced, and executed in his substitute, Jesus Christ. God cannot exact payment for sins twice since payment has been fully and forever paid. The believer is seen by the Father as clothed in the righteousness of Christ. God can therefore find no cause for accusing the Christian judicially any more than He can find cause for accusing Jesus Christ. Therefore, at the judgment seat of Christ forensic punishment will not be meted out for the believer's sins.

Rather, God disciplines us as a father disciplines his sons to bring us back into fellowship that we might be conformed to His Son. It is a family matter.

THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE BEMA

(1) To evaluate the quality of every believer's work whether it is good or bad, i.e., acceptable and thus worthy of rewards, or unacceptable, to be rejected and unworthy of rewards. Actually an evaluation is going on every day by the Lord (cf. Rev. 2-3).

(2) To destroy and remove unacceptable production portrayed in the symbols of wood, hay, and stubble. All sinful deeds, thoughts, and motives, as well as all good deeds done in the energy of the flesh will be consumed like wood, hay, and stubble before a fire because they are unworthy of reward. Why? This will be answered as we consider the basis on which rewards are given or lost.

(3) To reward the believer for all the good he or she has done as portrayed by the symbols of gold, silver, and precious stones, that which is valuable and can stand the test of fire without being consumed.

Scriptures:

1 Cor. 3:13-15 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

"Evident" is phaneros which means "known, plain, visible, revealed as to its nature." "The day" refers to a day well known and refers to the day of the Bema after the rapture of the church. "Declare it" is deloo which means "to make evident, clear." "Be revealed" is apokalupto and means "to unveil." "Test" is dokimazo and means "to test for the sake of approval." "The quality" is hupoios, a correlative and qualitative pronoun meaning "of what sort or kind."

1 Cor. 4:5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

"Bring to light" is photizo, "to bring to light, make visible." "Disclose" is phaneroo, "to manifest, reveal." The issue should be extremely clear from these two verses: The Lord will evaluate the quality and nature of every person's work. Compare also:

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Revelation 22:12 Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.

THE NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF THE BEMA

There are a number of passages that refer to the negative aspects of the Bema which need to be mentioned and explained. In these passages we read such things as “give account of himself,” “suffer loss,” “shrink away from Him in shame,” and “recompense for his deeds ... whether good or bad.”

Will believers experience shame, grief, remorse at the Bema? If so, how do we reconcile this with passages like Revelation 7:17, “God shall wipe away every tear from their eye,” and Revelation 21:4, “and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away,” or with Isaiah 65:17, “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind”?

The negative effects involve the following:

- (1) The loss suffered in 1 Corinthians 3:15 refers to the loss of rewards, not salvation as the verse goes on to make clear. Please note that the clause “he shall suffer loss” would be better rendered “it (the reward) shall be forfeited.”
- (2) The disqualification mentioned in 1 Corinthians 9:27 means disqualified from rewards, not loss of salvation. This is clear from the context and the analogy to the Greek athletic games.
- (3) The “recompense” (NASB) or the “receive back” (KJV) of 2 Corinthians 5:10 refers to the dispensing of rewards or their loss. The verb used is *komizo* and means “to carry off safe,” “to carry off as booty.” In the middle voice as here, it meant “to bear for oneself,” or “to receive back what is one’s own.”¹¹ Compare Matthew 25:27 and Ephesians 6:8.
- (4) That dispensing of rewards is in view is also evident from the Greek words in 2 Corinthians 5:10 translated “good” (*agathos*—valuable like good fruit) and “bad” (*phaulos*—unacceptable like rotten or spoiled fruit). The idea is not good in the sense of righteousness versus bad in the sense of evil or sinfulness. For those ideas Paul would have most likely used *kalos*, “good,” and *kakos*, “evil.” For good works, those valuable like good fruit, we will receive back rewards, but for bad works, those rotten and worthless, we will receive no rewards or the loss of rewards.

This is no more a punishment than when a student turns in a worthless assignment and receives an F or a D. His poor work results in a just grade or recompense. This is what his work deserves. There used to be a sign in the registrar’s office at Dallas Seminary which read, “Salvation is by grace ... Graduation is by works.”

(5) 1 John 2:28. This verse undoubtedly refers to the Bema and shows there will be both boldness as a result of abiding, and shame before the Lord as a result of failing to abide.

“And now little children.” John is writing to believers. This is his term of endearment for his readers as born again people.

“Abide in Him.” “Abide” is a synonym for fellowship which is the subject of the book (1:3-7). It means to remain in Him from the standpoint of drawing on His life as the source of ours and then to obey Him out of that relationship of dependence. This is the basis of rewards or the cause of their loss, the abiding, Christ-dependent life.

“So that” points us to the purpose, the return of the Savior and what it will mean.

“When He appears.” The “when” points to the imminency of the return of the Lord. It is literally “if He appears.” The conditional clause does not question the reality of Christ’s coming, only the time of it and thereby points to its imminency. “Appears” refers to the rapture which leads quickly into the Bema.

“We may have confidence.” “Confidence” is *parrhesia* and means “courage, boldness to speak.” Point: Though none of us are perfect or ever will be, still, faithfulness to abide and obey the Lord will give confidence of rewards.

“And not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming (presence).” Please note several things here. (a) The verb is what we call in Greek an aorist subjunctive, and with the basic meaning of this verb, the grammar points to a future act, but not a continuous state. This in no way suggests a permanent condition. (b) The voice of the verb is passive. The subject receives the action, that is, he is made to feel shame. But how? (c) There are two views:

(1) The believer who fails to abide is made to feel shame by the Lord, i.e., the Lord puts him to shame. This would be somewhat punitive and does not fit the concept of the Bema nor the promises of the Lord that we will not come into judgment.

(2) The believer who fails to abide experiences shame by the revelatory nature of Christ’s presence at the Bema. This is caused by the realization of what his own failure and sin has cost him in terms of the loss of rewards and loss of glory to the Lord. But this will only be momentary or short-lived at best in view of passages like Revelation 7:17; 21:4 and Isaiah 56:1.

Hoyt has a good summary of what this passage is talking about and involves:

The Bible suggests that there will be shame at the judgment seat of Christ to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the measure of unfaithfulness of each individual believer. Therefore it should be each believer’s impelling desire to be well-pleasing to the Lord in all things. Although

Christians apparently will reflect on this earthly life with some regret, they will also realize what is ahead for them in the heavenly life. This latter realization will be the source of boundless joy. English strikes a proper balance on this subject.

“Joy will indeed be the predominant emotion of life with the Lord; but I suspect that, when our works are made manifest at the tribunal, some grief will be mixed with the joy, and we shall know shame as we suffer loss. But we shall rejoice also as we realize that the rewards given will be another example of the grace of our Lord; for at best we are unprofitable servants” (E. Schuyler English, “The Church At the Tribunal,” in *Prophetic Truth Unfolding Today*, ed. Charles Lee Feinberg [Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1968], p. 29)

The elements of remorse, regret, and shame cannot be avoided in an examination of the judgment seat of Christ. But this sorrow must be somewhat relative because even for the finest of Christians there will be some things worthy of unceasing remorse in the light of God’s unapproachable holiness. This would mean that the finest of Christians could be sorrowful throughout eternity. However, this is not the picture that the New Testament gives of heaven. The overwhelming emotion is joyfulness and gratefulness. Although there is undeniably some measure of remorse or regret, this is not the overriding emotion to be experienced throughout the eternal state.

The emotional condition of the redeemed is that of complete and unending happiness. Emotion proceeds from the realization of facts in personal experience. Hope will at last become reality for all those who are delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8:18-25). Elimination of the curse, pain and death will also remove sorrow, tears and crying (Rev. 21:4).

The judgment seat of Christ might be compared to a commencement ceremony. At graduation there is some measure of disappointment and remorse that one did not do better and work harder. However, at such an event the overwhelming emotion is joy, not remorse. The graduates do not leave the auditorium weeping because they did not earn better grades. Rather, they are thankful that they have been graduated, and they are grateful for what they did achieve. To overdo the sorrow aspect of the judgment seat of Christ is to make heaven hell. To underdo the sorrow aspect is to make faithfulness inconsequential.

The Nature of the Rewards

What are they and how are they described in Scripture? They are described in terms of generalities. What we know about rewards is given in terms that are more general than specific. These are:

(1) The Promise of Crowns. This seems to be used as a symbol of victory, authority, and responsibility.

(2) The Promise of Heavenly Treasure (Matt. 6:20; 1 Pet. 1:4). Stresses their eternal value and security.

(3) The Promise of Accolades or Commendations. This is seen in those passages where a reward is administered in the form of something like “well done thou good and faithful servant ...” (cf. Matt. 25:21; Lk. 19:17; 1 Cor. 4:5b).

(4) The Promises to Overcomers. These could refer to special blessing of rewards to those believers who overcome special trials and tests rather than a general promise to all believers. See Rev. 2:7; 2:11, 17, 26.

(5) The Promise of Special Responsibilities and Authority of the Lord’s Possessions (cf. Matt. 19:28; 24:45-47; 25:21, 23; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; Rev. 2:26).

ANALOGIES TO CONSIDER

(1) A Thanksgiving Dinner. At a Thanksgiving dinner, each person eats a different amount, but each is satisfied. After our glorification, there will be no sinful nature to produce envy, or jealousy, or resentment, or feelings of dissatisfaction. We will each be enthralled with God and our glorified state.

(2) A Bat Boy at the World Series. Any young man who loves baseball would probably be thrilled to be a bat boy in the World Series, but he would not be jealous or resentful because he was not one of the stars of the game. He would just be delighted to be there and do what he was doing.

(3) A Graduate at Commencement. All the graduates are there and excited about graduating, yet at the time of rewards, some sorrow might be experienced, but it is quickly overcome by the joy of the event.

(4) Our Spiritual Gifts. Our rewards may be likened to our spiritual gifts. Our rewards seem to primarily be a matter of responsibility and maybe opportunities, but they will not be like badges or medals we wear as in the military. Remember that all of our crowns will be cast at the feet of Christ, for only He is worthy (Rev. 4:10-11). Also, Matthew 25:21, 23 and Luke 19:17-19 show us our rewards consist of authority over either many things or many cities. They may include galaxies of the universe. All believers will live in the millennium and in eternity with the Lord. Some will reign with Him, but, because of loss of rewards, evidently some will not.

(5) In Scripture, the church is viewed as the heavenly kingdom and a universal priesthood. This may indicate something of our authority. We may rule over galaxies, celestial bodies, the heavens, and definitely over angels, and the world (cf. 1 Cor. 6:2-3; 4:8).

(6) Israel is the earthly kingdom and will undoubtedly have authority over portions and sections

of the millennial kingdom and the eternal kingdom as emphasized in Matt. 25:21; Lk. 19:17-19; and Dan. 7:18, 22, 27.

The Crowns of the New Testament

THE WORDS USED FOR CROWNS

(1) Stephanos. This was the victor's crown, the wreath given to the victorious athlete before the judge at the Bema. It is the word used of the crowns promised to believers for faithfulness in the Christian life.

(2) Diadem. This was the royal crown, the crown of a king. It is used of the seven diadems of the Beast in Revelation 12:3 and 13:1. But, to stress that Christ is King of kings, this word is also used of the many diadems the Lord will wear at His return (Rev. 19:12).

The Principle. The Lord Jesus is the victor, and our victory is really His victory which is appropriated by faith. Crowns are given as rewards for faithfulness to appropriate God's grace and Christ's victory in the Christian life. They remind us of our responsibility to abide in the vine.

THE CROWNS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

(1) The Crown of Thorns (Matt. 27:29; Mk. 15:17; Jn. 19:2, 5). Speaks of Christ's work on the cross and stands for His victory over sin, Satan, and death.

(2) The Incorruptible Crown (1 Cor. 9:25). Two things: (a) This describes all the crowns. It contrasts our crowns with the temporal and temporary treasure of this life. (b) It is also a special crown given for faithfulness in running the race and exercising self-control in order to serve the Lord and finish the race.

(3) The Crown of Exultation or Rejoicing (1 Thess. 2:19; Phil. 4:1). This crown is a reward given for witnessing, follow-up, and ministry to others. In one sense, the Thessalonians will be Paul's crown, and the effect at the Bema and throughout eternity will be rejoicing or exultation over their presence in heaven.

But what did Paul mean by this? In view of his use of "crown" (stephanos, the victor's wreath) in other places, and the fact believers will cast their crowns before the Lord (Rev. 4:10), Paul may also have in mind a personal crown or reward that he will receive because of their presence at the return of the Lord. Though, in this passage the Apostle does not say he would receive a crown, this is suggested, if not here certainly in other passages. Though some of them were not living as they should, looking ahead and seeing them in glory brought joy and would bring great rejoicing.

(4) The Crown of Life (Jam. 1:12; Rev. 2:10). This crown is given for enduring testings (trials)

and temptation. The crown is not eternal life which is a gift through faith alone in Christ alone (Jn. 4:10; Rom. 3:24; 5:15-17; 6:23; Eph. 2:8), but a reward for enduring trials and overcoming temptation.

(5) The Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8). This crown is a reward given for faithfulness to use our gifts and opportunities in the service of the Lord and for loving His appearing. Note that these two things go together. To love His appearing is to live in the light of it.

(6) The Crown of Glory (1 Pet. 5:4). This crown is a reward promised to Elders for faithfulness in the discharge of their responsibilities in shepherding the people.

(7) The Casting of Crowns (Rev. 4:10, 11). Because Christ alone is worthy and because we can only be fruitful when we abide in Him allowing His life to fill ours, we will all cast our crowns before Him in recognition that all we have done is by His grace.

(8) The Many Crowns or Diadems (Rev. 19:12). The crowns of royalty which stand for Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lord who alone has the right to rule and judge the world.

1.3.9. Compare Hindu and Muslim ideas of how a person's life is judged with Christian ideas of how Christ will judge people.

In Hinduism, people are judged by Yama, the God of Death, in accordance with Karma (Action, work or deed). Depending on whether or not and how closely one adhered to one's duties in life, as well as one's deeds, they would be either punished or rewarded in their next life after reincarnation. Those who performed their duties and performed good deeds would reincarnate into a higher class, spending some time between lives in bliss in heaven, whereas those who did not follow the rules of their caste and performed bad deeds in life were either reincarnated into lower classes or lower lifeforms, such as animals, as well as sent to Naraka (the equivalent of Hell) and tortured by various means between lives. There are several layers to Naraka, and people are sent to different ones for different punishments based on the severity and nature of their misdeeds in life.

In Islam, there are two general paths after death: the first is Jannah, roughly the equivalent of paradise, and the second is Jahannam, the equivalent to Hell. One's assignment to Jannah or Jahannam are determined by one's deeds in life. Those who believe in and follow the rules laid out, as well as who perform good deeds, are allowed to enter Jannah, whereas those who do not believe in Islam or are unfaithful to it are punished in Jahannam. Jannah is a garden of perpetual bliss; its inhabitants live in a state of happiness and satisfaction with no worries or problems. They live in beautiful conditions in which they get everything they desire: beautiful clothes, servants, surroundings, food, etc.; all of the things indicative of a perfect life in the current world. In addition, they are brought close to God. Those in Jahannam are tortured, primarily by methods relating to fire, for eternity, or until Allah wills for it to stop.

Christians believe that the deceased leave their bodies and their spirit faces judgment for sin by God. Since all humans sin, the only way into Heaven is faith in Jesus Christ, who is both God's

Son and God in human form. People in Heaven have varying levels of wealth and power depending on their deeds in life. All others go to Hell. Once in Hell, people will suffer to varying degrees depending on their deeds in life. This punishment is eternal. When the world ends all of the dead will come back to life for their permanent judgement and placed in a new Heaven, Earth and Hell.

Christianity differs from other World beliefs in that while it allows a distinct avenue for judgement by Jesus Christ, passage into a comfortable eternal life cannot be earned, but happens due to the self-sacrifice of the same Jesus Christ.

Revision Questions

1. What is the meaning of judgment in a court of law?
2. Give a reference in the New Testament that people will be judged according to their behavior towards other people.
3. Discuss the judgment to its time
4. Discuss the basis of the judgment
5. Discuss the signs preceding the judgment

UNIT II

JESUS AND THE LAW

(Exodus 20: 1-17; Lev. 14: 1-32; 19: 11-18; Det. 23: 25; Mathew 5: 17-48; 7: 12; 13: 52; Mark 7: 1-23; Luke 4: 31-39; 5: 12-14; 5: 30-39; 6: 1-10; 7: 14; 8: 54; 10: 25-28; 11: 37-42; 13: 10-16; 14: 1-6; 16: 16-17; 17: 12-14; John 13: 34-35; Romans 7: 4-6; Gal. 3: 10-12; 1 John 5: 3).

2.1. Illustrate different attitudes in modern Zambia to school rules, to traffic laws, to other laws and to lawyers.

Laws serve to protect people from evil. Every society has individuals willing to harm others. Law creates a framework for reducing crime. First, it lays out the nature of proper and improper human conduct. It proscribes punishment for delinquency as a deterrent, and establishes the creation of enforcement mechanisms, such as police, that both prevent crime and enact punitive measures.

Law also promotes the common good. Humans tend to act out of self-interest. However, there are cases in which everyone benefits by pursuing a common interest and working together in cooperation. Anti-pollution laws, for instance, limit peoples' freedom to dispose of waste as they please to promote the common good of a clean environment and resultant health benefits.

Laws provide for the peaceful resolution of disputes. Without legal processes for settling differences, people would act against one another in aggression. Laws create peaceful processes for conflict resolution through the court system.

Laws and rules help people develop good behavior. Often, people initially obey rules due to fear of punishment. However, consistent behavior causes them to internalize lawful conduct and eventually do it, even when they are not being watched.

School discipline is the system of rules, punishments, and behavioral strategies appropriate to the regulation of children or adolescents and the maintenance of order in schools. Its aim is to control the students' actions and behavior.

An obedient student is in compliance with the school rules and codes of conduct. These rules may, for example, define the expected standards of clothing, timekeeping, social conduct, and work ethic. The term discipline is also applied to the punishment that is the consequence of breaking the rules. The aim of discipline is to set limits restricting certain behaviors or attitudes that are seen as harmful or going against school policies, educational norms, school traditions, et cetera.

Theory

School discipline practices are generally informed by theory from psychologists and educators. There are a number of theories to form a comprehensive discipline strategy for an entire school or a particular class.

- Positive approach is grounded in teachers' respect for students. Instills in students a sense of responsibility by using youth/adult partnerships to develop and share clear rules, provide daily opportunities for success, and administer in-school suspension for noncompliant students.
- Teacher effectiveness training differentiates between teacher-owned and student-owned problems, and proposes different strategies for dealing with each. Students are taught problem-solving and negotiation techniques. Researchers (e.g., Emmer and Aussiker) find that teachers like the programme and that their behaviour is influenced by it, but effects on student behaviour are unclear.
- Adlerian approaches is an umbrella term for a variety of methods which emphasize understanding the individual's reasons for maladaptive behavior and helping misbehaving students to alter their behavior, while at the same time finding ways to get their needs met. Named for psychiatrist Alfred Adler. These approaches have shown some positive effects on self-concept, attitudes, and locus of control, but effects on behavior are inconclusive. Not only were the statistics on suspensions and vandalism significant, but also the recorded interview of teachers demonstrates the improvement in student attitude and behaviour, school atmosphere, academic performance, and beyond that, personal and professional growth.

Appropriate school learning theory and educational philosophy is a strategy for preventing violence and promoting order and discipline in schools, put forward by educational philosopher Daniel Greenberg and practised by the Sudbury Valley School.

Throughout the history of education the most common means of maintaining discipline in schools was corporal punishment. While a child was in school, a teacher was expected to act as a substitute parent, with many forms of parental discipline or rewards open to them. This often meant that students were commonly chastised with the birch, cane, paddle, strap or yardstick if they did something wrong.

Corporal punishment in schools has now disappeared from most Western countries, including all European countries. Thirty-one U.S. states as well as the District of Columbia have banned it, most recently New Mexico in 2011. The other nineteen states (mostly in the South) continue to allow corporal punishment in schools. Paddling is still used to a significant (though declining) degree in some public schools in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. Private schools in these and most other states may also use it, though many choose not to do so.

Official corporal punishment, often by caning, remains commonplace in schools in some Asian, African and Caribbean countries.

Most mainstream schools in most other countries retain punishment for misbehavior, but it usually takes non-corporal forms such as detention and suspension.

Detention is one of the most common punishments in schools in the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Singapore, Canada, Australia, South Africa and some other countries. It requires the pupil to report to a designated area of the school during a specified time on a school day (typically either recess or after school) and remain there for a specified period of time, but also may require a pupil to report to that part of school at a certain time on a non-school day, e.g. "Saturday detention" at some US, UK, and Irish schools (especially for serious offenses not quite

serious enough for suspension).

In the UK, the Education Act 1997 obliges a (state) school to give parents or guardians at least 24 hours' notice of a detention outside school hours so arrangements for transport and/or childcare can be made. This should say why it was given and, more importantly, how long it will last (Detentions usually last from as short as 10 minutes or less to as long as 5 hours or more).

Typically, in schools in the US, UK, and Singapore, if one misses a detention, then another is added or the student gets a more serious punishment. In UK schools, for offenses too serious for a normal detention but not serious enough for a detention requiring the pupil to return to school at a certain time on a non-school day, a detention can require a pupil to return to school 1-2 hours after school ends on a school day, e.g. "Friday Night Detention".

Suspension or temporary exclusion is mandatory leave assigned to a student as a form of punishment that can last anywhere from one day to a few weeks, during which time the student is not allowed to attend regular lessons. In some US, Australian and Canadian schools, there are two types of suspension: In-School (ISS) and Out-of-School (OSS). In-school requires the student to report to school as usual but sit in one room all day. Out-of-school bans the student from being on school grounds. The student's parents/guardians are notified of the reason for and duration of the out-of-school suspension, and usually also for in-school suspensions. Sometimes students have to complete work during their suspensions, for which they receive no credit. (OSS only In some UK schools, there is Reverse as well as normal suspension. A pupil suspended is sent home for a period of time set. A pupil reverse suspended is required to be at school during the holidays. Some pupils often have to complete work while reverse suspended.

Expulsion, exclusion, withdrawing, or permanent exclusion permanently bans the student from being on school grounds. This is the ultimate last resort, when all other methods of discipline have failed. However, in extreme situations, it may also be used for a single offense. Some education authorities have a nominated school in which all excluded students are collected; this typically has a much higher staffing level than mainstream schools. In some US public schools, expulsions and exclusions are so serious that they require an appearance before the Board of Education or the court system. In the UK, head teachers may make the decision to exclude, but the student's parents have the right of appeal to the local education authority. This has proved controversial in cases where the head teacher's decision has been overturned (and his or her authority thereby undermined), and there are proposals to abolish the right of appeal.

Expulsion from a private school is a more straightforward matter, since the school can merely terminate its contract with the parents if the pupil does not have siblings in the same school.

In schools like in many other places, rules are viewed differently. There are those who want a laissez-faire kind of life for the students and there are those who feel communities such as schools should have order. Where one comes from will determine his or her attitude to obey or disregard the rules.

Traffic Lights

Traffic on roads may consist of pedestrians, ridden or herded animals, vehicles, streetcars, buses and other conveyances, either singly or together, while using the public way for purposes of

travel. Traffic laws are the laws which govern traffic and regulate vehicles, while rules of the road are both the laws and the informal rules that may have developed over time to facilitate the orderly and timely flow of traffic.

Organized traffic generally has well-established priorities, lanes, right-of-way, and traffic control at intersections.

Traffic is formally organized in many jurisdictions, with marked lanes, junctions, intersections, interchanges, traffic signals, or signs. Traffic is often classified by type: heavy motor vehicle (e.g., car, truck); other vehicle (e.g., moped, bicycle); and pedestrian. Different classes may share speed limits and easement, or may be segregated. Some jurisdictions may have very detailed and complex rules of the road while others rely more on drivers' common sense and willingness to cooperate.

Organization typically produces a better combination of travel safety and efficiency. Events which disrupt the flow and may cause traffic to degenerate into a disorganized mess include: road construction, collisions and debris in the roadway. On particularly busy freeways, a minor disruption may persist in a phenomenon known as traffic waves. A complete breakdown of organization may result in traffic congestion and gridlock. Simulations of organized traffic frequently involve queuing theory, stochastic processes and equations of mathematical physics applied to traffic flow.

The word traffic originally meant "trade" (as it still does) and comes from the Old Italian verb *trafficare* and noun *traffico*. The origin of the Italian words is unclear. Suggestions include Catalan *trafegar* 'decant', an assumed Vulgar Latin verb *transfricare* 'rub across', an assumed Vulgar Latin combination of *trans-* and *facere* 'make or do', Arabic *tafrik* 'distribution', and Arabic *taraffaqa*, which can mean 'seek profit'.

Rules of the road and driving etiquette are the general practices and procedures that road users are required to follow. These rules usually apply to all road users, though they are of special importance to motorists and cyclists. These rules govern interactions between vehicles and with pedestrians. The basic traffic rules are defined by an international treaty under the authority of the United Nations, the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic. Not all countries are signatory to the convention and, even among signatories, local variations in practice may be found. There are also unwritten local rules of the road, which are generally understood by local drivers.

As a general rule, drivers are expected to avoid a collision with another vehicle and pedestrians, regardless of whether or not the applicable rules of the road allow them to be where they happen to be.

In addition to the rules applicable by default, traffic signs and traffic lights must be obeyed, and instructions may be given by a police officer, either routinely (on a busy crossing instead of traffic lights) or as road traffic control around a construction zone, accident, or other road disruption.

These rules should be distinguished from the mechanical procedures required to operate one's vehicle.

Directionality

Traffic going in opposite directions should be separated in such a way that they do not block each other's way. The most basic rule is whether to use the left or right side of the road.

Traffic regulations

In many countries, the rules of the road are codified, setting out the legal requirements and punishments for breaking them.

In Zambia, the rules are set out in the Highway Code, which includes obligations but also advice on how to drive sensibly and safely.

Priority (right of way)

Vehicles often come into conflict with other vehicles and pedestrians because their intended courses of travel intersect, and thus interfere with each other's routes. The general principle that establishes who has the right to go first is called "right of way", or "priority". It establishes who has the right to use the conflicting part of the road and who has to wait until the other does so.

Signs, signals, markings and other features are often used to make priority explicit. Some signs, such as the stop sign, are nearly universal. When there are no signs or markings, different rules are observed depending on the location. These default priority rules differ between countries, and may even vary within countries. Trends toward uniformity are exemplified at an international level by the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals, which prescribes standardized traffic control devices (signs, signals, and markings) for establishing the right of way where necessary.

Crosswalks (or pedestrian crossings) are common in populated areas, and may indicate that pedestrians have priority over vehicular traffic. In most modern cities, the traffic signal is used to establish the right of way on the busy roads. Its primary purpose is to give each road a duration of time in which its traffic may use the intersection in an organized way. The intervals of time assigned for each road may be adjusted to take into account factors such as difference in volume of traffic, the needs of pedestrians, or other traffic signals. Pedestrian crossings may be located near other traffic control devices; if they are not also regulated in some way, vehicles must give priority to them when in use. Traffic on a public road usually has priority over other traffic such as traffic emerging from private access; rail crossings and drawbridges are typical exceptions.

Uncontrolled traffic

Uncontrolled traffic comes in the absence of lane markings and traffic control signals. On roads without marked lanes, drivers tend to keep to the appropriate side if the road is wide enough. Drivers frequently overtake others. Obstructions are common.

Intersections have no signals or signage, and a particular road at a busy intersection may be dominant – that is, its traffic flows – until a break in traffic, at which time the dominance shifts to the other road where vehicles are queued. At the intersection of two perpendicular roads, a traffic jam may result if four vehicles face each other side-on.

Turning

Drivers will often want to cease to travel a straight line and turn onto another road or onto private property. The vehicle's directional signals (commonly known as "blinkers" or "indicators") are

often used as a way to announce one's intention to turn, thus alerting other drivers. The actual usage of directional signals varies greatly amongst countries, although its purpose should be the same in all countries: to indicate a driver's intention to depart from the current (and natural) flow of traffic well before the departure is executed (typically 3 seconds as a guideline).

This will usually mean that turning traffic will have to stop in order to wait for a breach to turn, and this might cause inconvenience for drivers that follow them but do not want to turn. This is why dedicated lanes and protected traffic signals for turning are sometimes provided.

On roads with multiple lanes, turning traffic is generally expected to move to the lane closest to the direction they wish to turn. For example, traffic intending to turn right will usually move to the rightmost lane before the intersection. Likewise, left-turning traffic will move to the leftmost lane. Exceptions to this rule may exist where for example the traffic authority decides that the two rightmost lanes will be for turning right, in which case drivers may take whichever of them to turn. In certain parts of the world traffic will adapt to informal patterns that rise naturally rather than by force of authority; for example, it is common for drivers to observe (and trust) the turn signals used by other drivers in order to make turns from other lanes. For example if several vehicles on the right lane are all turning right, a vehicle may come from the next-to-right lane and turn right as well, doing so in parallel with the other right-turning vehicles.

Pedestrian crossings

Pedestrians must often cross from one side of a road to the other, and in doing so may come into the way of vehicles traveling on the road. In many places pedestrians are entirely left to look after themselves, that is, they must observe the road and cross when they can see that no traffic will threaten them. Busier cities usually provide pedestrian crossings, which are strips of the road where pedestrians are expected to cross.

The actual appearance of pedestrian crossings varies greatly, but the two most common appearances are: (1) a series of parallel white stripes or (2) two long horizontal white lines. The former is usually preferred, as it stands out more conspicuously against the dark pavement.

Some pedestrian crossings also accompany a traffic signal which will make vehicles stop at regular intervals so the pedestrians can cross. Some countries have "intelligent" pedestrian signals, where the pedestrian must push a button in order to assert his intention to cross. The traffic signal will use that information to schedule itself, that is, when no pedestrians are present the signal will never pointlessly cause vehicle traffic to stop. In some countries, approaching traffic is monitored by radar or by electromagnetic sensors buried in the road surface, and the pedestrian crossing lights are set to red if a speed infringement is detected. This has the effect of enforcing the local speed limit without the necessity of issuing speeding citations, etc.

Pedestrian crossings without traffic signals are also common. In this case, the traffic laws usually states that the pedestrian has the right of way when crossing, and that vehicles must stop when a pedestrian uses the crossing. Countries and driving cultures vary greatly as to the extent to which this is respected.

Some jurisdictions forbid crossing or using the road anywhere other than at crossings, termed jaywalking. In other areas, pedestrians may have the right to cross where they choose, and have right of way over vehicular traffic while crossing.

Level crossings

An example of a typical rail crossing in Zambia.

A level crossing is an at-grade intersection of a railway by a road. Because of safety issues, they are often equipped with closable gates, crossing bells and warning signs.

Speed limits

The higher the speed of a vehicle, the more difficult collision avoidance becomes and the greater the damage if a collision does occur. Therefore, many countries of the world limit the maximum speed allowed on their roads. Vehicles are not supposed to be driven at speeds which are higher than the posted maximum.

Overtaking

Overtaking (or passing) refers to a maneuver by which one or more vehicles traveling in the same direction are passed by another vehicle. On two-lane roads, when there is a split line or a dashed line on the side of the overtaker, drivers may overtake when it is safe. On multi-lane roads in most jurisdictions, overtaking is permitted in the "slower" lanes, though many require a special circumstance.

Lanes

When a street is wide enough to accommodate several vehicles traveling side-by-side, it is usual for traffic to organize itself into lanes, that is, parallel corridors of traffic. Some roads have one lane for each direction of travel and others have multiple lanes for each direction. Most countries apply pavement markings to clearly indicate the limits of each lane and the direction of travel that it must be used for. In other countries lanes have no markings at all and drivers follow them mostly by intuition rather than visual stimulus.

On roads that have multiple lanes going in the same direction, drivers may usually shift amongst lanes as they please, but they must do so in a way that does not cause inconvenience to other drivers. Driving cultures vary greatly on the issue of "lane ownership": in some countries, drivers traveling in a lane will be very protective of their right to travel in it while in others drivers will routinely expect other drivers to shift back and forth.

Designation and overtaking

The usual designation for lanes on divided highways is the fastest lane is the one closest to the center of the road, and the slowest to the edge of the road. Drivers are usually expected to keep in the slowest lane unless overtaking, though with more traffic congestion all lanes are often used.

When driving on the left:

- The lane designated for faster traffic is on the right.
- The lane designated for slower traffic is on the left.
- Most freeway exits are on the left.

Overtaking is permitted to the right, and sometimes to the left. Countries party to the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic have uniform rules about overtaking and lane designation. The convention details (amongst other things) that "Every driver shall keep to the edge of the

carriageway appropriate to the direction of traffic", and the "Drivers overtaking shall do so on the side opposite to that appropriate to the direction of traffic", notwithstanding the presence or absence of oncoming traffic. Allowed exceptions to these rules include turning or heavy traffic, traffic in lines, or situation in which signs or markings must dictate otherwise. These rules must be more strictly adhered to on roads with oncoming traffic, but still apply on multi-lane and divided highways.

One-way roadways

In order to increase traffic capacity and safety, a route may have two or more separate roads for each direction of traffic. Alternatively, a given road might be declared one-way.

One-way streets

In more sophisticated systems such as large cities, this concept is further extended: some streets are marked as being one-way, and on those streets all traffic must flow in only one direction, but pedestrians on the sidewalks are generally not limited to one-way movement. A driver wishing to reach a destination he already passed must use other streets in order to return. Usage of one-way streets, despite the inconveniences it can bring to individual drivers, can greatly improve traffic flow since they usually allow traffic to move faster and tend to simplify intersections.

Congested traffic

In some places traffic volume is consistently, extremely large, either during periods of time referred to as rush hour or perpetually. Exceptionally, traffic upstream of a vehicular collision or an obstruction, such as construction, may also be constrained, resulting in a traffic jam. Such dynamics in relation to traffic congestion is known as traffic flow. Traffic engineers sometimes gauge the quality of traffic flow in terms of level of service.

In measured traffic data, common spatiotemporal empirical features of traffic congestion have been found that are qualitatively the same for different highways in different countries. Some of these common features distinguish the wide moving jam and synchronized flow phases of congested traffic in Kerner's three-phase traffic theory.

Rush hour

During business days in most major cities, traffic congestion reaches great intensity at predictable times of the day due to the large number of vehicles using the road at the same time. This phenomenon is called rush hour or peak hour, although the period of high traffic intensity often exceeds one hour.

Lawyers

A lawyer is a person who practices law, as an attorney, counselor or solicitor. Law is the system of rules of conduct established by the sovereign government of a society to correct wrongs, maintain the stability of political and social authority, and deliver justice. Working as a lawyer involves the practical application of abstract legal theories and knowledge to solve specific individualized problems, or to advance the interests of those who hire lawyers to perform legal

services. The role of the lawyer varies significantly across legal jurisdictions, and so it can be treated here in only the most general terms.

Terminology

In practice, legal jurisdictions exercise their right to determine who is recognized as being a lawyer. As a result, the meaning of the term "lawyer" may vary from place to place.

- In Australia, the word "lawyer" is used to refer to both barristers and solicitors (whether in private practice or practicing as corporate in-house counsel).
- In Canada, the word "lawyer" only refers to individuals who have been called to the bar or, in Quebec, have qualified as civil law notaries. Common law lawyers in Canada are formally and properly called "barristers and solicitors", but should not be referred to as "attorneys", since that term has a different meaning in Canadian usage. However, in Quebec, civil law advocates (or *avocats* in French) often call themselves "attorney" and sometimes "barrister and solicitor" in English.
- In England and Wales, "lawyer" is used to refer to persons who provide reserved legal activities and includes practitioners such as barristers, solicitors, registered foreign lawyers, patent attorneys, trade mark attorneys, licensed conveyancers, commissioners for oaths, immigration advisers and claims management services [Legal Services Act 2007] as well as people who are involved with the law but do not practise it on behalf of individual clients, such as judges, court clerks, and drafters of legislation.
- In India, the term "lawyer" is often colloquially used, but the official term is "advocate" as prescribed under the Advocates Act, 1961.
- In Scotland, the word "lawyer" refers to a more specific group of legally trained people. It specifically includes advocates and solicitors. In a generic sense, it may also include judges and law-trained support staff.
- In the United States, the term generally refers to attorneys who may practice law. It is never used to refer to patent agents or paralegals.
- Other nations tend to have comparable terms for the analogous concept.
- In Zambia

Responsibilities

In most countries, particularly civil law countries, there has been a tradition of giving many legal tasks to a variety of civil law notaries, clerks, and scribes. These countries do not have "lawyers" in the American sense, insofar as that term refers to a single type of general-purpose legal services provider; rather, their legal professions consist of a large number of different kinds of law-trained persons, known as jurists, some of whom are advocates who are licensed to practice in the courts. It is difficult to formulate accurate generalizations that cover all the countries with multiple legal professions, because each country has traditionally had its own peculiar method of dividing up legal work among all its different types of legal professionals.

Notably, England, the mother of the common law jurisdictions, emerged from the Dark Ages with similar complexity in its legal professions, but then evolved by the 19th century to a single dichotomy between barristers and solicitors. An equivalent dichotomy developed between advocates and procurators in some civil law countries; these two types did not always monopolize the practice of law, in that they coexisted with civil law notaries.

Several countries that originally had two or more legal professions have since fused or united their professions into a single type of lawyer. Most countries in this category are common law countries, though France, a civil law country, merged its jurists in 1990 and 1991 in response to Anglo-American competition. In countries with fused professions, a lawyer is usually permitted to carry out all or nearly all the responsibilities listed below.

Oral argument in the courts

Arguing a client's case before a judge or jury in a court of law is the traditional province of the barrister in England, and of advocates in some civil law jurisdictions. However, the boundary between barristers and solicitors have evolved. In England today, the barrister monopoly covers only appellate courts, and barristers must compete directly with solicitors in many trial courts. In countries like the United States, that have fused legal professions, there are trial lawyers who specialize in trying cases in court, but trial lawyers do not have a *de jure* monopoly like barristers. In some countries, litigants have the option of arguing *pro se*, or on their own behalf. It is common for litigants to appear unrepresented before certain courts like small claims courts; indeed, many such courts do not allow lawyers to speak for their clients, in an effort to save money for all participants in a small case. In other countries, like Venezuela or Portugal, no one may appear before a judge unless represented by a lawyer. The advantage of the latter regime is that lawyers are familiar with the court's customs and procedures, and make the legal system more efficient for all involved. Unrepresented parties often damage their own credibility or slow the court down as a result of their inexperience.

Research and drafting of court papers

Often, lawyers brief a court in writing on the issues in a case before the issues can be orally argued. They may have to perform extensive research into relevant facts and law while drafting legal papers and preparing for oral argument.

In England, the usual division of labor is that a solicitor will obtain the facts of the case from the client and then brief a barrister (usually in writing). The barrister then researches and drafts the necessary court pleadings (which will be filed and served by the solicitor) and orally argues the case.

In Spain, the procurator merely signs and presents the papers to the court, but it is the advocate who drafts the papers and argues the case.

In some countries, like Japan, a scrivener or clerk may fill out court forms and draft simple papers for lay persons who cannot afford or do not need attorneys, and advise them on how to manage and argue their own cases.

Advocacy (written and oral) in administrative hearings

In most developed countries, the legislature has granted original jurisdiction over highly technical matters to executive branch administrative agencies which oversee such things. As a result, some lawyers have become specialists in administrative law. In a few countries, there is a special category of jurists with a monopoly over this form of advocacy; for example, France formerly had *conseilsjuridiques* (who were merged into the main legal profession in 1991). In other countries, like the United States, lawyers have been effectively barred by statute from certain types of administrative hearings in order to preserve their informality.

Client intake and counseling (with regard to pending litigation)

An important aspect of a lawyer's job is developing and managing relationships with clients (or the client's employees, if the lawyer works in-house for a government or corporation). The client-lawyer relationship often begins with an intake interview where the lawyer gets to know the client personally, discovers the facts of the client's case, clarifies what the client wants to accomplish, shapes the client's expectations as to what actually can be accomplished, begins to develop various claims or defenses, and explains her or his fees to the client.

In England, only solicitors were traditionally in direct contact with the client. The solicitor retained a barrister if one was necessary and acted as an intermediary between the barrister and the client. In most cases barristers were obliged, under what is known as the "cab rank rule", to accept instructions for a case in an area in which they held themselves out as practising, at a court at which they normally appeared and at their usual rates.

Legal advice

Legal advice is the application of abstract principles of law to the concrete facts of the client's case in order to advise the client about what they should do next. In many countries, only a properly licensed lawyer may provide legal advice to clients for good consideration, even if no lawsuit is contemplated or is in progress. Therefore, even conveyancers and corporate in-house counsel must first get a license to practice, though they may actually spend very little of their careers in court. Failure to obey such a rule is the crime of unauthorized practice of law.

In other countries, jurists who hold law degrees are allowed to provide legal advice to individuals or to corporations, and it is irrelevant if they lack a license and cannot appear in court. Some countries go further; in England and Wales, there is no general prohibition on the giving of legal advice. Sometimes civil law notaries are allowed to give legal advice, as in Belgium. In many countries, non-jurist accountants may provide what is technically legal advice in tax and accounting matters.

Protecting intellectual property

In virtually all countries, patents, trademarks, industrial designs and other forms of intellectual property must be formally registered with a government agency in order to receive maximum protection under the law. The division of such work among lawyers, licensed non-lawyer jurists/agents, and ordinary clerks or scriveners varies greatly from one country to the next.

Negotiating and drafting contracts

In some countries, the negotiating and drafting of contracts is considered to be similar to the provision of legal advice, so that it is subject to the licensing requirement explained above. In others, jurists or notaries may negotiate or draft contracts.

Lawyers in some civil law countries traditionally deprecated "transactional law" or "business law" as beneath them. French law firms developed transactional departments only in the 1990s when they started to lose business to international firms based in the United States and the United Kingdom (where solicitors have always done transactional work).

Conveyancing

Conveyancing is the drafting of the documents necessary for the transfer of real property, such as deeds and mortgages. In some jurisdictions, all real estate transactions must be carried out by a lawyer (or a solicitor where that distinction still exists). Such a monopoly is quite valuable from the lawyer's point of view; historically, conveyancing accounted for about half of English solicitors' income (though this has since changed), and a 1978 study showed that conveyancing "accounts for as much as 80 percent of solicitor-client contact in New South Wales. In most common law jurisdictions outside of the United States, this monopoly arose from an 1804 law that was introduced by William Pitt the Younger as a quid pro quo for the raising of fees on the certification of legal professionals such as barristers, solicitors, attorneys and notaries.

In others, the use of a lawyer is optional and banks, title companies, or realtors may be used instead. In some civil law jurisdictions, real estate transactions are handled by civil law notaries. In England and Wales a special class of legal professional—the licensed conveyancer—is also allowed to carry out conveyancing services for reward.

Carrying out the intent of the deceased

In many countries, only lawyers have the legal authority to draft wills, trusts, and any other documents that ensure the efficient disposition of a person's property after death. In some civil law countries this responsibility is handled by civil law notaries.

In the United States, the estates of the deceased must generally be administered by a court through probate. American lawyers have a profitable monopoly on dispensing advice about probate law (which has been heavily criticized).

Prosecution and defense of criminal suspects

In many civil law countries, prosecutors are trained and employed as part of the judiciary; they are law-trained jurists, but may not necessarily be lawyers in the sense that the word is used in the common law world. In common law countries, prosecutors are usually lawyers holding regular licenses who simply happen to work for the government office that files criminal charges against suspects. Criminal defense lawyers specialize in the defense of those charged with any crimes.

Common law/civil law

In most common law countries, especially those with fused professions, lawyers have many options over the course of their careers. Besides private practice, they can become a prosecutor, government counsel, corporate in-house counsel, administrative law judge, judge, arbitrator, or law professor. There are also many non-legal jobs for which legal training is good preparation, such as politician, corporate executive, government administrator, investment banker, entrepreneur, or journalist. In developing countries like India, a large majority of law students never actually practice, but simply use their law degree as a foundation for careers in other fields.

In most civil law countries, lawyers generally structure their legal education around their chosen specialty; the boundaries between different types of lawyers are carefully defined and hard to cross. After one earns a law degree, career mobility may be severely constrained. For example, unlike their American counterparts, it is difficult for German judges to leave the bench and become advocates in private practice. Another interesting example is France, where for much of

the 20th century, all judiciary officials were graduates of an elite professional school for judges. Although the French judiciary has begun experimenting with the Anglo-American model of appointing judges from accomplished advocates, the few advocates who have actually joined the bench this way are looked down upon by their colleagues who have taken the traditional route to judicial office.

In a few civil law countries, such as Sweden, the legal profession is not rigorously bifurcated and everyone within it can easily change roles and arenas.

Specialization

In many countries, lawyers are general practitioners who will take almost any kind of case that walks in the door. In others, there has been a tendency since the start of the 20th century for lawyers to specialize early in their careers. In countries where specialization is prevalent, many lawyers specialize in representing one side in one particular area of the law; thus, it is common in the United States to hear of plaintiffs' personal injury attorneys.

Organization

Lawyers in private practice generally work in specialized businesses known as law firms, with the exception of English barristers. The vast majority of law firms worldwide are small businesses that range in size from 1 to 10 lawyers. The United States, with its large number of firms with more than 50 lawyers, is an exception. The United Kingdom and Australia are also exceptions, as the UK, Australia and the U.S. are now home to several firms with more than 1,000 lawyers after a wave of mergers in the late 1990s.

Notably, barristers in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and some states in Australia do not work in "law firms". Those who offer their services to members of the general public—as opposed to those working "in-house" — are required to be self-employed. Most work in groupings known as "sets" or "chambers", where some administrative and marketing costs are shared. An important effect of this different organizational structure is that there is no conflict of interest where barristers in the same chambers work for opposing sides in a case, and in some specialised chambers this is commonplace.

Professional associations and regulation

Mandatory licensing and membership in professional organizations

In some jurisdictions, either the judiciary or the Ministry of Justice directly supervises the admission, licensing, and regulation of lawyers.

Other jurisdictions, by statute, tradition, or court order, have granted such powers to a professional association which all lawyers must belong to. In the U.S., such associations are known as mandatory, integrated, or unified bar associations. In the Commonwealth of Nations, similar organizations are known as Inns of Court, bar councils or law societies. In civil law countries, comparable organizations are known as Orders of Advocates, Chambers of Advocates, Colleges of Advocates, Faculties of Advocates, or similar names. Generally, a nonmember caught practicing law may be liable for the crime of unauthorized practice of law.

In common law countries with divided legal professions, barristers traditionally belong to the bar council (or an Inn of Court) and solicitors belong to the law society. In the English-speaking world, the largest mandatory professional association of lawyers is the State Bar of California, with 230,000 members.

Some countries admit and regulate lawyers at the national level, so that a lawyer, once licensed, can argue cases in any court in the land. This is common in small countries like New Zealand, Japan, Portugal and Belgium. Others, especially those with federal governments, tend to regulate lawyers at the state or provincial level; this is the case in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Switzerland, to name a few. Brazil is the most well-known federal government that regulates lawyers at the national level.

Some countries, like Italy, regulate lawyers at the regional level, and a few, like Belgium, even regulate them at the local level (that is, they are licensed and regulated by the local equivalent of bar associations but can advocate in courts nationwide). In Germany, lawyers are admitted to regional bars and may appear for clients before all courts nationwide with the exception of the Federal Court of Justice of Germany (Bundesgerichtshof or BGH); oddly, securing admission to the BGH's bar limits a lawyer's practice solely to the supreme federal courts and the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany.

Generally, geographic limitations can be troublesome for a lawyer who discovers that his client's cause requires him to litigate in a court beyond the normal geographic scope of his license. Although most courts have special *pro hac vice* rules for such occasions, the lawyer will still have to deal with a different set of professional responsibility rules, as well as the possibility of other differences in substantive and procedural law.

Some countries grant licenses to non-resident lawyers, who may then appear regularly on behalf of foreign clients. Others require all lawyers to live in the jurisdiction or to even hold national citizenship as a prerequisite for receiving a license to practice. But the trend in industrialized countries since the 1970s has been to abolish citizenship and residency restrictions. For example, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down a citizenship requirement on equality rights grounds in 1989, and similarly, American citizenship and residency requirements were struck down as unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973 and 1985, respectively. The European Court of Justice made similar decisions in 1974 and 1977 striking down citizenship restrictions in Belgium and France.

Who regulates lawyers

A key difference among countries is whether lawyers should be regulated solely by an independent judiciary and its subordinate institutions (a self-regulating legal profession), or whether lawyers should be subject to supervision by the Ministry of Justice in the executive branch.

In most civil law countries, the government has traditionally exercised tight control over the legal profession in order to ensure a steady supply of loyal judges and bureaucrats. That is, lawyers were expected first and foremost to serve the state, and the availability of counsel for private litigants was an afterthought. Even in civil law countries like Norway which have partially self-regulating professions, the Ministry of Justice is the sole issuer of licenses, and makes its own independent re-evaluation of a lawyer's fitness to practice after a lawyer has been

expelled from the Advocates' Association. Brazil is an unusual exception in that its national Order of Advocates has become a fully self-regulating institution (with direct control over licensing) and has successfully resisted government attempts to place it under the control of the Ministry of Labor.

Of all the civil law countries, Communist countries historically went the farthest towards total state control, with all Communist lawyers forced to practice in collectives by the mid-1950s. China is a prime example: technically, the People's Republic of China did not have lawyers, and instead had only poorly trained, state-employed "legal workers," prior to the enactment of a comprehensive reform package in 1996 by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.

In contrast, common law lawyers have traditionally regulated themselves through institutions where the influence of non-lawyers, if any, was weak and indirect (despite nominal state control). Such institutions have been traditionally dominated by private practitioners who opposed strong state control of the profession on the grounds that it would endanger the ability of lawyers to zealously and competently advocate their clients' causes in the adversarial system of justice.

However, the concept of the self-regulating profession has been criticized as a sham which serves to legitimize the professional monopoly while protecting the profession from public scrutiny. Disciplinary mechanisms have been astonishingly ineffective, and penalties have been light or nonexistent.

Voluntary associations

Lawyers are always free to form voluntary associations of their own, apart from any licensing or mandatory membership that may be required by the laws of their jurisdiction. Like their mandatory counterparts, such organizations may exist at all geographic levels. In American English, such associations are known as voluntary bar associations. The largest voluntary professional association of lawyers in the English-speaking world is the American Bar Association. In some countries, like France and Italy, lawyers have also formed trade unions.

Cultural perception

Hostility towards the legal profession is a widespread phenomenon. The legal profession was abolished in Prussia in 1780 and in France in 1789, though both countries eventually realized that their judicial systems could not function efficiently without lawyers. Complaints about too many lawyers were common in both England and the United States in the 1840s, Germany in the 1910s, and in Australia, Canada, the United States, and Scotland in the 1980s.

Public distrust of lawyers reached record heights in the United States after the Watergate scandal. In the aftermath of Watergate, legal self-help books became popular among those who wished to solve their legal problems without having to deal with lawyers. Lawyer jokes (already a perennial favorite) also soared in popularity in English-speaking North America as a result of Watergate. In 1989, American legal self-help publisher Nolo Press published a 171-page compilation of negative anecdotes about lawyers from throughout human history.

In *Adventures in Law and Justice* (2003), legal researcher Bryan Horrigan dedicated a chapter to

"Myths, Fictions, and Realities" about law and illustrated the perennial criticism of lawyers as "amoral [...] guns for hire" with a quote from Ambrose Bierce's satirical *The Devil's Dictionary* (1911) that summarized the noun as: "LAWYER, n. One skilled in circumvention of the law."

More generally, in *Legal Ethics: A Comparative Study* (2004), law professor Geoffrey C. Hazard, Jr. with Angelo Dondi briefly examined the "regulations attempting to suppress lawyer misconduct" and noted that their similarity around the world was paralleled by a "remarkable consistency" in certain "persistent [sic?] grievances" about lawyers that transcends both time and locale, from the Bible to medieval England to dynastic China. The authors then generalized these common complaints about lawyers as being classified into five "general categories" as follows:

- abuse of litigation in various ways, including using dilatory tactics and false evidence and making frivolous arguments to the courts;
- preparation of false documentation, such as false deeds, contracts, or wills;
- deceiving clients and other persons and misappropriating property;
- procrastination in dealings with clients; and
- charging excessive fees.

Some studies have shown that suicide rates among lawyers may be as much as six times higher than the average population, and commentators suggest that the low opinion the public has of lawyers, combined with their own high ideals of justice, which in practice they may see denied, increase the depression rates of those in this profession.

Compensation

Lawyers are paid for their work in a variety of ways. In private practice, they may work for an hourly fee according to a billable hour structure, a contingency fee (usually in cases involving personal injury), or a lump sum payment if the matter is straightforward. Normally, most lawyers negotiate a written fee agreement up front and may require a non-refundable retainer in advance. In many countries there are fee-shifting arrangements by which the loser must pay the winner's fees and costs; the United States is the major exception, although in turn, its legislators have carved out many exceptions to the so-called "American Rule" of no fee shifting.

Lawyers working directly on the payroll of governments, nonprofits, and corporations usually earn a regular annual salary. In many countries, with the notable exception of Germany, lawyers can also volunteer their labor in the service of worthy causes through an arrangement called *pro bono* (short for *pro bono publico*, "for the common good"). Traditionally such work was performed on behalf of the poor, but in some countries it has now expanded to many other causes such as the environment.

In some countries, there are legal aid lawyers who specialize in providing legal services to the indigent. France and Spain even have formal fee structures by which lawyers are compensated by the government for legal aid cases on a per-case basis. A similar system, though not as extensive or generous, operates in Australia, Canada, and South Africa.

In other countries, legal aid specialists are practically nonexistent. This may be because non-lawyers are allowed to provide such services; in both Italy and Belgium, trade unions and political parties provide what can be characterized as legal aid services. Some legal aid in Belgium is also provided by young lawyer apprentices subsidized by local bar associations (known as the *pro deo* system), as well as consumer protection nonprofit organizations and

Public Assistance Agencies subsidized by local governments. In Germany, mandatory fee structures have enabled widespread implementation of affordable legal expense insurance.

Attitudes towards laws and rules vary among people, mainly depending upon their understanding of the law and rules, upbringing and also whether or not they were treated fairly by the law enforcers. People who do not understand the law and who have been victims of injustice usually have a negative attitude towards law, rules, and lawyers. In Zambia, there are various attitudes. Some people follow the law and rules while others do not. If the law is taught to the general public, there will be more appreciation instead of discovering the law when someone has committed an offense.

2.5. Show what role obedience to rules and laws had in traditional Zambian society.

Not only in Zambia, obedience is a part of the foundation of society. Without obedience, naught would exist but chaos and anarchy. Without stability, productivity and the well-being of the citizens become non-existent. Because of this, one must question how obedient society can be without losing its individuality, for a society with no individuality does not consist of people but of mindless drones, unthinkingly carrying out orders for the powers. In order for human beings to maintain their individuality and a stable society, a balance between obedience and insubordination must be found. Obedience, in human behavior, is a form of "social influence in which a person yields to explicit instructions or orders from an authority figure". Obedience is generally distinguished from compliance, which is behavior influenced by peers, and from conformity, which is behavior intended to match that of the majority. Obedience can be seen as immoral, amoral and moral. For example, in a situation when one orders a person to kill another innocent person and he or she does so willingly, it is generally considered to be immoral. However, when one orders a person to kill an enemy who will end many innocent lives and he or she does so willingly, it can be deemed moral.

Borrowing that new bestselling novel from your friend and neglecting to return it. Lying to your mother. Taking illegal drugs. Having an affair with your neighbor's spouse. Shoplifting a shirt from the mall. Running a stop sign. Neglecting to pay your restaurant bill. There are rules against all such things.

While some of these infractions are less serious than others, each of them is a form of negligence to a rule or law. In life, we all have certain commitments and expectations. Some are legal contracts – a marriage document affirms that we stay true to our spouses, an employment contract may ensure that we not share our company's private information, a driver's license holds that we abide by the rules of the road. Other commitments may not be signed documents, but they are equally important.

For example, as citizens of countries, we are expected to uphold laws regarding theft and not physically assault others. Imagine a society in which everyone lives selfishly and lawlessly without regard to established boundaries. Such a place sounds primitive, unsafe, and not very pleasant.

Some of us mock "blind" obedience arguing that we should think for ourselves and that it's OK

to deviate from boundaries, rules, or laws. But rules and laws exist for our physical safety. Similarly, God's commandments exist for our spiritual safety.

The Zambian forefathers tried to formulate rules and regulations and by following them, they tried to instill the principle of obedience in their future generation. They wanted for their posterity to mind and respect rules. The rules they set were most often for physical safety and emotional and spiritual well-being. The same can be said for God's rules for us.

"Throughout the ages, men and women have sought for knowledge and understanding concerning this mortal existence and their place and purpose in it, as well as for the way to peace and happiness. God's laws serve the same purpose, providing our peace, safety and happiness.

What benefits do we gain from obedience?

- Obedience brings peace. We all make mistakes and commit sins, and to some degree experiment with "living on the edge." But those pathways often lead to feelings of regret, shame, diminished trust, and sorrow. At times, it is difficult to do the right thing, but ultimately, we are happier when we do.
- We set a positive example. As parents, we want our kids to make smart, healthy choices. They notice the things we do. Our kids will often emulate our bad habits.
- We have a smoother home life. Life is challenging enough without complicating it with disobedience. When we take drugs or steal, for example, we bring trouble to ourselves and our families.
- "The great test of this life is obedience." Our perfect example of obedience is Jesus Christ. To the end, he was righteous, loyal, and submissive. As we follow his example, we can gain more peace in our lives. We can obtain light and knowledge as we live righteously and stay in tune with God. As the world's standards of right versus wrong continue to shift, we can stay on course by doing our best to be obedient to positive laws.

2.6. State Jesus' summary of the Old Testament law and the new commandment.

The word "law" occurs 223 times in the New Testament of the King James Version. The word "ordinances," which means law occurs seven times.

Because of verses like Colossians 2:14 nearly the entire Christian world believes that the Ten Commandments are no longer in effect. This verse says, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;"

Paul says in Romans 3:31, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." A law that is established is certainly not abolished or nailed to the cross.

So, has the law been established, or has it been nailed to the cross and abolished? Obviously there is more than one type of law referred to in the New Testament.

God gave four different types of laws to the Israelites in the Old Testament. They were:

1. The Ten Commandments
2. The religious ceremonial laws
3. The health laws
4. The civil laws

One of the major problems with the words “law,” “ordinances,” and “covenant” in the New Testament is that it is often not clear which “law” or “covenant” is being discussed. But in each case God has given us a way to know which law or covenant is meant. Here we get into the problems of interpretation of the Bible.

A contradiction is of necessity a lie. If one thing is true and another disagrees with it, the second can not be true. It must be a lie. Titus 1:2 tells us that God cannot lie. “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;” Hebrews 6:18 also tells us that God cannot lie. “That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie. . . .” And finally Numbers 23:19 tells us this also. “God is not a man, that he should lie. . . .”

Since it is impossible for God to lie, and contradictions are lies, there can be no contradictions anywhere in the Bible. Therefore, the correct way to interpret the Bible is so that there are no contradictions in the entire Bible. When we interpret the Bible so that there are no contradictions anywhere, we know we have it right. This is the method God has given us whereby we might know when we have the Bible interpreted correctly.

We read many Bible verses in chapter one that showed that the Sabbath commandment would be in effect forever, a perpetual covenant. God’s Sabbath commandment, will never end.

Therefore, when we read something in the New Testament that is interpreted in such a way that claims that the Ten Commandments are no longer in effect, we know that this interpretation is wrong. For instance, there are places in the New Testament that talk about our not being under the law. In light of the verses we have read that say that the commandments will stand forever, this cannot mean that the Ten Commandments have been abolished. We will see later what not being under the law means.

Regarding these four types of laws God gave to ancient Israel, here are the types of laws and the ones that were discontinued.

1. The great universal moral law, the Ten Commandments

We will see shortly that the Ten Commandment law is God’s constitution for the government of heaven and the entire universe. We will see that the Ten Commandments have been in effect ever since God was and will be in effect throughout all eternity, as long as God exists.

2. The religious ceremonial laws

God planned from the beginning that the religious ceremonial laws would cease at the cross, because Christ, the true Lamb of God was sacrificed. The animal sacrifices all pointed forward to Christ's death on the cross. "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, . . ." (Daniel 9:27) For us to offer animal sacrifices today would be a sacrilege, saying that Christ did not die for our sins.

3. The health laws

These are laws that God gave us to keep us healthy and free from disease. The physics of the human body have not changed since these laws were given. The health laws are just as much a benefit for us today as they were for the ancient Israelites. Consider Exodus 15:26: ". . . If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, and will do that which is right in his sight, and will give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon you, that I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that heals you." If people perfectly obeyed God and kept the health laws today they would NEVER be sick.

4. The civil laws□□: These were the laws governing the civil penalties for crimes within the theocracy of Israel. Many of our civil laws today are based on these laws to some degree. God does not require these to be strictly adhered to today, because the theocracy is no longer in existence, but they should be used to guide us in setting up our governments. When someone is convicted of murder, for instance, the murderer should be put to death swiftly in order to discourage others from this sin. "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. . . ." And ". . . blood defiles the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." (Genesis 9:6, Numbers 35:33)

Interpreting the Bible so that there are no contradictions anywhere will always show whether the New Testament is referring to the Ten Commandments or not.

Let us again consider Second Timothy 3:16,17 that tells us that the entire Old Testament is applicable for us today. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." When this was written there was no New Testament. This verse is telling us that all of the Old Testament is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. We cannot disregard any part of the Bible and be safe.

We are told in the clearest of language in Psalms 111:7-9 that all of God's Ten Commandments will stand fast for ever and ever. "The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness. He sent redemption to his people: he has commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name."

These verses tell us that God's Ten Commandment law will stand throughout all eternity. These verses also make it clear that the covenant that stands forever is the covenant of the Ten

Commandments. This is very important, because when the New Testament speaks of a covenant or a law that was discontinued, it cannot possibly refer to the law or covenant of the Ten Commandments.

Furthermore, Ecclesiastes 3:14 makes it very clear that God will never change or abolish His Ten Commandments or His Sabbath day. "I know that, whatever God does, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God does it, that men should fear before him." How could God have possibly made it any plainer than the wording in this verse?

At the end of creation week God blessed, sanctified, and made holy Saturday, the seventh day of the week. God never blessed, sanctified, or made holy any other day of the week, and Ecclesiastes 3:14 makes it clear that God's seventh-day Sabbath, Saturday, will remain blessed, sanctified and holy throughout all eternity.

Many people try to twist these clear Bible texts that tell us that the Ten Commandments will stand forever by saying that these verses are "figurative" language, or these verses are "spiritual," or that "forever" does not really mean forever, or in some other way try to cloud the meaning. Many so-called Christians today claim that the Ten Commandments were only for the Jews, but they are quick to say that they are not allowed to lie, murder, commit adultery, or break any other of the Ten Commandments except the Sabbath commandment!

We saw that Jesus, Himself, tells us to live by every word out of the mouth of God in Matthew 4:4. "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." Directly out of the mouth of God came the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:3-17. These are the ONLY verses in the Bible that God, Himself, wrote. And God, Himself, wrote them to make us realize their importance and to make us realize that they would forever be in effect. That is why He wrote them on tables of stone — to show their permanence.

Which verses in the Bible would you consider to be more important, the verses God, Himself, wrote or the verses someone else wrote?

Jesus said in Matthew 5:17,18 that He did not come to destroy the law. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." We saw in chapter one that the earth will abide forever. Here again in the clearest words possible Jesus tells us that He did not come to abolish the law but that the law will be in effect for ever.

Which law is Jesus referring to? The law that will be in force throughout all eternity, the Ten Commandments. How can Sunday-keepers claim that Jesus abolished the law, when He says plainly in these verses that He did NOT abolish the law? Jesus fulfilled the law by perfectly obeying every one of the Ten Commandments.

We saw in First John 3:4 that sin is breaking any of the Ten Commandments. "Whoever commits

sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” When Sunday-keepers throw out the Ten Commandments, they are throwing away the definition of sin.

When did God institute His Ten Commandment law? We know that Satan sinned in heaven before the earth was created, so the Ten Commandments must have been in force then. We also know that Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, so the Ten Commandments must have been in force in the Garden of Eden. We saw in Chapter one that those who are saved will be keeping God’s Sabbath day, Saturday, holy throughout all eternity. The Ten Commandment law is the constitution of heaven. It is the law whereby God’s entire universe operates. If it were not, the entire universe would have the problems we have on earth today.

In fact, one of the main reasons God created the earth was to show to the universe what happens when people continually break God’s law. First Corinthians 4:9 tells us: “For we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men.” The word “spectacle” is translated from the Greek word theatron, which means “theater.” This present earth was created to be the theater of the universe where God is demonstrating to all the intelligent beings in the universe what happens when a society disobeys His law, the Ten Commandments. As the final result of the drama taking place on this earth, all of God’s creation — men, angels, and other forms of intelligent life throughout the vast reaches of space — will thoroughly understand that without obeying God’s law there can be no peace, for they are witnessing the trouble, misery, pain, and death that are the natural consequences of disregarding the law of God.

Isaiah 24:4,5 is a prophecy of the trouble that occurs when the people of the earth declare that God’s law is no longer in effect. “The earth mourns and fades away, the world languishes and fades away, the haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.” The wars and trouble, the pain and suffering all over the earth today are a direct result of people disregarding God’s Ten Commandments.

Today, the earth is the stage, the theater of the universe, where the tragic results of disobeying God’s law are being revealed; but then, throughout all eternity, after God creates the new earth from the ashes of the old, the Glory of the universe will be centered here. Today God rules from heaven; but after He creates the new earth, He will make His home and His throne on the new earth. This world will be the center of God’s government and the home of the righteous throughout eternity. Revelation 21:3 says, “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” The word “tabernacle” means tent, and it signifies the home of God on the earth with the righteous from all ages. Yes, this world, where the great Creator God of the universe, Jesus Christ, was brutally murdered by those whom He created, will be Christ’s throne throughout all eternity. The next verse tells us that there will be no unhappiness or problems of any kind in this new earth. Everything will be perfect. “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”

And we have seen in Isaiah 66:22,23 that in God’s new earth, everyone will be keeping

Saturday, God's Sabbath day, holy throughout all eternity.

God's Ten Commandments, His constitution of the universe, is enshrined in His temple in heaven. Revelation 11:19 tells us that the Ark of the Covenant is in the Temple of God in Heaven. "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." The Ark of the Covenant contains the Ten Commandments. The Greek word, *diatheke*, which is translated "testament" in this verse is also translated "covenant" seventeen times in the New Testament. Most of the other English translations of the Bible say "Ark of His Covenant" in this verse.

Most people acknowledge that Christians should obey most of the 10 Commandments, including those that prohibit worshipping other gods, murder, stealing, adultery and lying—just to name a few of the instructions spoken by God to the ancient Israelites from Mount Sinai. It is only the Fourth Commandment to keep the seventh-day Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11) that some claim is not repeated in the New Testament and therefore is no longer required of Christians.

Are all of the 10 Commandments upheld in the New Testament? To answer this question, consider what Christ taught concerning the commandments and the following chart showing the repetition of the commandments in the New Testament.

What Christ taught concerning the 10 Commandments in the New Testament

Christ consistently upheld the 10 Commandments as given in the Old Testament. In His Sermon on the Mount, He very pointedly stated: "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:17).

Although some mistakenly think that "fulfill" in this passage means to complete and therefore abolish, what Jesus said afterwards shows this could not be the case. Continuing, Jesus said: "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (verses 18-19).

Realizing that Jesus consistently upheld all of the commandments, including observing the seventh-day Sabbath (Matthew 19:17-19; Luke 4:16), some wrongly suggest that it was the apostle Paul, with Jesus' personal approval, who introduced grace and the abolishment of the law.

"The 10 Commandments given by God in the Old Testament continue to be God's expectations of Christians today. The truth is that Jesus did not change His mind about the importance of keeping all of the 10 Commandments. As Hebrews 13:8 states: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."

Toward the end of the first century—some 60 years after His death and resurrection—Jesus revealed end-time instructions through John in the book of Revelation. In this book He identifies faithful members of His Church as those "who keep the commandments of God" (Revelation

12:17). Some of the final words of the Bible and this revelation of Jesus Christ likewise state: “Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14).

The 10 Commandments given by God in the Old Testament continue to be God’s expectations of Christians today.

The 10 Commandments in the Old and New Testaments

The following chart identifies references to the 10 Commandments in both the Old and New Testaments.

First Commandment	Exodus 20:3; Deuteronomy 5:7	Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8; Revelation 14:7
Second Commandment	Exodus 20:4-6; Deuteronomy 5:8-10	Acts 15:20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-20; Ephesians 5:5
Third Commandment	Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11	Matthew 5:33-37; 1 Timothy 6:1; James 2:7
Fourth Commandment	Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15	Luke 4:16; 23:55-56; Acts 17:1-2; 18:4; Hebrews 4:9; 1 John 2:6
Fifth Commandment	Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16	Matthew 15:4-9; 19:19; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Romans 1:29-30; Ephesians 6:1-3
Sixth Commandment	Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17	Matthew 5:21-22; 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Romans 1:29-30; 13:9
Seventh Commandment	Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18	Matthew 5:27-28; 19:18; Mark 10:11-12, 19; Luke 16:18; 18:20; Romans 7:2-3; 13:9
Eighth Commandment	Exodus 20:15; Deuteronomy 5:19	Matthew 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Romans 13:9; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Peter 4:15; Revelation 9:21
Ninth Commandment	Exodus 20:16; Deuteronomy 5:20	Matthew 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 13:9; Ephesians 4:25
10th Commandment	Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21	Luke 12:15; Romans 1:29; 7:7; 13:9; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:3, 5

Beyond the 10 commandments, Jesus did not abolish the moral law, he came to fulfill it as seen in the verses below:

Matthew 22:34-40

Beyond the 10 commandments, Jesus did not abolish the moral law, he came to fulfill it as seen in the verses below:

Matthew 22:34-40

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. 35 One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

37 Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

2.7. State, and illustrate from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus; teaching about the Old Testament law.

Jesus did not come to abolish the law of Moses and the Prophets, but He came to fulfil them as stated in the following verses:

Matthew 5

17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19 Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Murder

21 “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ 22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

25 “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. 26 Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Adultery

27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

Divorce

31 “It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32 But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Oaths

33 “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ 34 But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. 36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. 37 All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Eye for Eye

38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ 39 But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. 40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. 41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Love for Enemies

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

All 10 commandments are taught in the New Testament, except the Sabbath commandment! What does this tell us? It tells us that we have rest now in Jesus, not once a week, but every day of the week because he is the Lord of the Sabbath! □ □ Jesus seems to bring the 10 commandments to a next level. He makes us aware that we all have transgressed and still are transgressing God's commandments.

Jesus Christ' New Commandments

Once an expert of the law asked Jesus: Matt 22:36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" □ □ Jesus answered vv. 37-40 "Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." □ □ In other words, love should be our guiding motive in life.

Anything we do must be guided from above, otherwise all of our efforts are futile. Love for God and love for mankind. How could we do any less than our Master Jesus Christ? □□ If we read carefully throughout the New Testament, we discover that Jesus explicitly gave us some commandments. Some of them He even called "new". Let us explore these commandments. If Jesus ordered them to us, they must be important!

i. Commandment to believe in Jesus

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." □□ 1 John 3:21-24 "Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us."

ii. Commandment to love one another

John 13:34-35 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." □□ This is a very powerful commandment for loving one another! What is the purpose of this commandment? "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Is your church practicing this new command from Jesus? Are you attracting the unsaved to your church by your love for one another? □□ 1 John 3:11-12 "This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another." □□ 1 John 4:8-12 "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." □

1 John 4:19-21 "We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother." □□ Anyone who says he/she loves God and faithfully keeps the first 4 commandments concerning loving God will all their heart, is a liar! You cannot love God and hate anyone, especially someone in the faith! □□ This is confirmed in 1 John 2:3-11 "We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining. Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is

nothing in him to make him stumble. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him."□□

The following Bible texts were pronounced by Jesus Himself prior to His crucifixion. One needs to read them in succession to understand the full meaning of them. This is close to Jesus' heart and He wants you for any of His disciples to obey these instructions:□□

a. John 14:15-18 "If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever- the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."□□

b. John 14:21 "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."□□

c. John 15:9-11 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love."□□

d. John 15:14-15 "You are my friends if you do what I command."□□What does Jesus command from us? Here is His answer:□□

e. John 15:12-13 "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."□□

f. John 15:17 "This is my command: Love each other."□□It is true that this notion of loving others as you love yourself can also be found in the Old Testament.

However, the New Testament reinforces this notion constantly.□□Lev 19:18 "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD."□□1 Thess 4:9-10 "Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. And in fact, you do love all the brothers throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers, to do so more and more."□□

How did God teach the believers in Thessalonica to love one another? The next Bible text will shed some light in this.□□1 John 3:21-24 "Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us."□□

It is interesting to note that the Sabbath is not listed as the proof that Jesus lives within us. Instead, we are told: John 14:26-27: "by the Spirit he gave us". No wonder that Jesus promised in John 14:26-27: "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will

teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" and that John 16:13 tells us: "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth."

iii. Commandment to preach the gospel

Matt 28:18-20 "Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."□□

It is interesting that Jesus stresses the fact that we are to teach others "to obey everything I have commanded you". The Bible texts that we have listed in this and the previous sections are what Jesus commanded!□□

Acts 10:42 "He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead."□□Are you following God's commandments? I hope so. Once Jesus lives in a person through His Holy Spirit, the person cannot do otherwise than to love his/her brothers and sisters in the faith and to preach His gospel. His love is so evident in people's life that you want to share this awesome God with all those who don't know Him.

2.8. Relate and explain the controversy between Jesus and some other Jews about observance of the Sabbath.

Matthew 12: 1-13; Mark 2:23- 3:6; Luke 6:1-11; 13:10 – 14:6

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. 2 When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."

3 He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? 4 He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. 5 Or haven't you read in the Law that the priests on Sabbath duty in the temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are innocent? 6 I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. 7 If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,'[a] you would not have condemned the innocent. 8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

9 Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, 10 and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to bring charges against Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

11 He said to them, "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? 12 How much more valuable is a person than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

13 Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. 14 But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

There are two major lessons Jesus taught: The first one is that Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath and the second one is that the Sabbath was made for people and not people for the Sabbath. Under normal circumstances, there should be no work. However, saving human life can take place even on the Sabbath because there is no law against saving life be it of an animal or of a human being.

2.9. Explain Jesus’ teaching about the Old Testament Law in relation to the new Kingdom of God and show how He expressed this teaching in his attitude of fasting.

Matthew 9: 14-17

14 Then John’s disciples came and asked him, “How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?”

15 Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.

16 “No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. 17 Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

Here is the conclusion of the matter. Jesus’ way and motive of fasting cannot be mixed with others. His is a new way of doing things.

2.10. Compare Jesus’ attitude to the law with his attitude to the Jewish traditions.

Matthew 23: 1-36.

Jesus was never against the Law of Moses or the prophets. He seriously confronted the Jewish traditions that kept people captive. His “You have heard But I tell you this ...” statements are a corrective indication He brings to the Jewish traditions.

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: 2 “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. 3 So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. 4 They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

5 “Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries[a] wide and the tassels on their garments long; 6 they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; 7 they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called ‘Rabbi’ by others.

8 “But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers.

9 And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. 10 Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one Instructor, the Messiah. 11 The greatest among you will be your servant. 12 For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

Seven Woes on the Teachers of the Law and the Pharisees

13 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.

15 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when you have succeeded, you make them twice as much a child of hell as you are.

16 “Woe to you, blind guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gold of the temple is bound by that oath.’ 17 You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? 18 You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but anyone who swears by the gift on the altar is bound by that oath.’ 19 You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? 20 Therefore, anyone who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. 21 And anyone who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. 22 And anyone who swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by the one who sits on it.

23 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. 24 You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

25 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26 Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.

27 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. 28 In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

29 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. 30 And you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ 31 So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. 32 Go ahead, then, and complete what your ancestors started!

33 “You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? 34 Therefore I am sending you prophets and sages and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. 35 And so upon

you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 Truly I tell you, all this will come on this generation.

2.11. Show how the actions and teachings of Jesus contradicted the Pharisees' idea about ritual cleanliness.

Matthew 15: 11 – 20

Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, 2 “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!”

3 Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? 4 For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ 5 But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ 6 they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. 7 You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you:

8 “These people honor me with their lips, □ but their hearts are far from me.

9 They worship me in vain; □ their teachings are merely human rules.”

10 Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen and understand. 11 What goes into someone’s mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.”

12 Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?”

13 He replied, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. 14 Leave them; they are blind guides. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a pit.”

15 Peter said, “Explain the parable to us.”

16 “Are you still so dull?” Jesus asked them. 17 “Don’t you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? 18 But the things that come out of a person’s mouth come from the heart, and these defile them. 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. 20 These are what defile a person; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile them.”

2.12. Propose and defend a Christian way of behaviour in those situations. -Illustrate the role of laws in Christian churches in modern Zambia.

There is no other way of behaving besides following into the footsteps of Jesus. Laws are still valid, especially the moral laws. The ceremonial laws do not have to be applied because they were meant for the Jews.

2.13. Show, from the New Testament letters, what the Early Christians taught about Christian attitudes to law.

1 Peter 2: 11-17

11 Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. 12 Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. 15 For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. 16 Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. 17 Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.

Romans 13: 1-7

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. 2 Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. 3 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. 4 For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.

6 This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. 7 Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

General Christian view of government and law.

Government affects our lives daily. It tells us how fast to drive. It regulates our commerce. It protects us from foreign and domestic strife. Yet we rarely take time to consider its basic function. What is a biblical view of government? Why do we have government? What kind of government does the Bible allow?

Developing a Christian view of government is difficult since the Bible does not provide an exhaustive treatment of government. However, Christians are not free to believe whatever they want. Christians should not abandon the Bible when they begin to think about these issues because there is a great deal of biblical material that can be used to judge particular political options.

The Bible does provide a basis for evaluating various political philosophies because it clearly delineates a view of human nature. And every political theory rests on a particular view of human nature.

The Bible describes two elements of human nature. This viewpoint is helpful in judging government systems. Because humans are created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26–27), they are able to exercise judgment and rationality. However, humans are also fallen creatures (Gen. 3). This human sinfulness (Rom. 3:23) has therefore created a need to control evil and sinful human behavior through civil government.

We are created by a God of order (1 Cor. 14:33); therefore we also seek order through governmental structures.

A Christian view of government differs significantly from views proposed by many political theorists. The basis for civil government is rooted in our created nature. We are rational and volitional beings. We are not determined by fate, as the Greeks would have said, nor are we determined by our environment as modern behaviorists say. We have the power of choice. Therefore we can exercise delegated power over the created order. Thus a biblical view of human nature requires a governmental system that acknowledges human responsibility.

While the source of civil government is rooted in human responsibility, the need for government derives from the necessity of controlling human sinfulness.

Since civil government is necessary and divinely ordained by God (Rom. 13:1–7), it is ultimately under God's control. It has been given three political responsibilities: the sword of justice (to punish criminals), the sword of order (to thwart rebellion), and the sword of war (to defend the state).

As citizens, Christians have been given a number of responsibilities. They are called to render service and obedience to the government (Matt. 22:21). Because it is a God-ordained institution, they are to submit to civil authority (1 Pet. 2:13–17) as they would to other institutions of God. As will be discussed later, Christians are not to give total and final allegiance to the secular state. Other God-ordained institutions exist in society alongside the state. Christians' final allegiance must be to God. They are to obey civil authorities (Rom. 13:5) in order to avoid anarchy and chaos, but there may be times when they may be forced to disobey (Acts 5:29).

Because government is a divinely ordained institution, Christians have a responsibility to work within governmental structures to bring about change. Government is part of the order of creation and a minister of God (Rom. 13:4). Christians are to obey governmental authorities (Rom. 13:1–4, 1 Peter 2:13–14). Christians are also to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13–16) in the midst of the political context.

Although governments may be guilty of injustice, Christians should not stop working for justice or cease to be concerned about human rights. We do not give up on marriage as an institution simply because there are so many divorces, and we do not give up on the church because of many internal problems. Each God-ordained institution manifests human sinfulness and disobedience. Our responsibility as Christians is to call political leaders back to this God-ordained task. Government is a legitimate sphere of Christian service, and so we should not look to government only when our rights are being abused. We are to be concerned with social justice and should see governmental action as a legitimate instrument to achieve just ends.

A Christian view of government should also be concerned with human rights. Human rights in a Christian system are based on a biblical view of human dignity. A bill of rights, therefore, does not grant rights to individuals, but instead acknowledges these rights as already existing. The writings of John Locke along with the Declaration of Independence capture this idea by stating that government is based on the inalienable rights of individuals. Government based on humanism, however, would not see rights as inalienable, and thus opens the possibility for the state to redefine what rights its citizens may enjoy. The rights of citizens in a republic, for example, are articulated in terms of what the government is forbidden to do. But in totalitarian governments, while the rights of citizens may also be spelled out, power ultimately resides in the government not the people.

A Christian view of government also recognizes the need to limit the influence of sin in society. This is best achieved by placing certain checks on governmental authority. This protects citizens from the abuse or misuse of governmental power which results when sinful individuals are given too much governmental control.

The greatest threat to liberty comes from the exercise of power. History has shown that power is a corrupting force when placed in human hands. In the Old Testament theocracy there was less danger of abuse because the head of state was God. The Bible amply documents the dangers that ensued when power was transferred to a single king. Even David, a man after God's own heart (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22), abused his power and Israel experienced great calamity (2 Sam. 11–21).

Governmental Authority

A key question in political theory is how to determine the limits of governmental authority. With the remarkable growth in the size and scope of government, it is necessary to define clearly the lines of governmental authority. The Bible provides some guidelines.

However, it is often difficult to set limits or draw lines on governmental authority. As already noted, the Old Testament theocracy differed from our modern democratic government. Although human nature is the same, drawing biblical principles from an agrarian, monolithic culture and applying them to a technological, pluralistic culture requires discernment.

Part of this difficulty can be eased by separating two issues. First, should government legislate morality?. Second, what are the limits of governmental sovereignty? The following are a few general principles helpful in determining the limits of governmental authority.

As Christians, we recognize that God has ordained other institutions besides civil government which exercise authority in their particular sphere of influence. This is in contrast to other political systems that see the state as the sovereign agent over human affairs, exercising sovereignty over every other human institution. A Christian view is different.

The first institution is the church (Heb. 12:18–24; 1 Pet. 2:9–10). Jesus taught that the government should work in harmony with the church and should recognize its sovereignty in spiritual matters (Matt. 22:21).

The second institution is the family (Eph. 5:22–32, 1 Pet. 3:1–7). The family is an institution under God and His authority (Gen.1:26–28, 2:20–25). When the family breaks down, the government often has to step in to protect the rights of the wife (in cases of wife abuse) or children (in cases of child abuse or adoption). The biblical emphasis, however, is not so much on rights as it is on responsibilities and mutual submission (Eph. 5:21).

A third institution is education. Children are not the wards of the state, but belong to God (Ps. 127:3) and are given to parents as a gift from God. Parents are to teach their children (Deut. 4:9) and may also entrust them to tutors (Gal. 4:2).

In a humanistic system of government, the institutions of church and family are usually subordinated to the state. In an atheistic system, ultimately the state becomes a substitute god and is given additional power to adjudicate disputes and bring order to a society. Since institutions exist by permission of the state, there is always the possibility that a new social contract will allow government to intervene in the areas of church and family.

A Christian view of government recognizes the sovereignty of these spheres. Governmental intervention into the spheres of church and family is necessary in certain cases where there is threat to life, liberty, or property. Otherwise civil government should recognize the sovereignty of other God-ordained institutions.

2.14. Identify the importance of obeying religious laws

For Hindus in Zambia

Not much is said about the subject. However, obedience to any laws has the benefits of peace, safety and prosperity. Whether one is in India or Zambia, a religious person will observe the law regardless of the place where he or she is found.

For Muslims in Zambia

Just like for Hinduism, obedience to any laws has the benefits of peace, safety and prosperity. Whether one is in India or Zambia, a religious person will observe the law regardless of the place where he or she is found.

Along with the numerous commands in the Qur'an that command people to obey, there are verses of the Qur'an that advise Muslims of the merits of obedience. There are also many verses that teach Muslims that if a society is to succeed, it must be organized, and it must have an authority, and in an Islamic society, there must be a religious authority, or at least an authority that is guided by the laws and traditions of the faith. Contrary to many ideas of freedom, in Islam there is no concept of freedom that implies that the individual human being is an absolute sovereign, and therefore left entirely to one's own opinion as a governing law. If this were the case, it would be impossible to govern, or to have peace, or cooperation. Each individual would be like a single kingdom, operating only in its own personal interests, and according to its own individual tastes, and desires, while at the same time forced by circumstances to utilize common space and share limited resources! . Whereas we might all agree that the aim of religion is to free

mankind to think, and chose and judge, Islam asks that on the basic issues, that are the foundation for cooperation between peoples, and social organization, that there be compromise of individual will and recognition of authority. Who this authority is, or will be is a matter for discussion. It is worthwhile to note that in Islam, such discussion is not only permitted, but also encouraged, since through an examination of such issues, people increase their knowledge and strengthen their understanding of these ideas. The proof of this is found in a conversation held between God and the prophet Abraham, in the Qur'an, where Abraham asks God to explain the resurrection. The Qur'an says: "Behold Abraham said, "My Lord, show me how thou give life to the dead. He (God) said "Does thou not then believe?" He (Abraham) said, "Yes, but I ask to satisfy my understanding" (2:260) God, according to the Qur'an, then proceeds to answer Abraham's questions, saying that souls are trained to respond to the voice of their master, and when He calls, they will rise from the graves.

The type of questioning that seems to be prohibited in the Qur'an is the type of questioning that raises issues with the intent to create suspicion or to undermine the conviction of believers. It has a malicious intent. This is the type of questioning that is aimed at creating doubt, or casting aspersion upon others due to their beliefs, rather than to question a criminal or illegal act, or truly subversive ideology.. The Qur'an says "avoid suspicion, since in some cases suspicion is a sin." In another verse the Qur'an says it was this type of questioning that caused the ancient Jews to loose faith in the Law of Moses, and to transgress. Yet, on the other hand, when discussants are agreed upon the basic principles of the faith, they can engage one another in discussions where they deliberate the proper ways to achieve desires within the boundaries established by Islamic law, principles and tradition. This means that whether or not to obey is not the point of! such discussions, but rather how we carry out our duty, which is a matter of covenant with God for the Muslim. According to the Qur'an, the Muslim (servant of God), has entered into a covenant with God through choice. The terms of the covenant are that people will obey God, and he will not punish them. In fact He has promised people that He will forgive their faults, relieve them of fears and grant security along with prosperity and many other rewards, because they have sacrificed the individual will to some extent, for the betterment of society as a whole. The Qur'an says: "such as dispute about the signs of God without authority grievous and odious is such conduct in the sight of God" (40:35). This means that not only is disputation on certain topics only allowed for those who are knowledgeable, and recognized as authorities, but also that in Islam, the disputants must be people who are recognized as religious authorities. They must be able to make decisions, since what they are debating are matters pertinent to the message of the Qur'an, and the quality of life of Muslims, and their potential.

2.15. Outline the teaching of Zambian Humanism

Though it might have variations according to the local context, humanism as a philosophy of life has some basic teachings. Law should be the foundation of any government. Whether law is based upon moral absolutes, changing consensus, or totalitarian whim is of crucial importance. Until fairly recently, Western culture held to a notion that common law was founded upon God's revealed moral absolutes.

In a Christian view of government, law is based upon God's revealed commandments. Law is not based upon human opinion or sociological convention. Law is rooted in God's unchangeable

character and derived from biblical principles of morality.

In humanism, humanity is the source of law. Law is merely the expression of human will or mind. Since ethics and morality are man-made, so also is law. Humanists' law is rooted in human opinion, and thus is relative and arbitrary.

In humanism, the king is somehow the law. Humanism attacks the idea of the divine right of kings. Humanism holds that the king or the state rules as God's appointed regent. Thus, the king's word is the law. Passages such as Romans 13 indicate that the king, as well as anyone else, was under God's law and not above it.

When Kaunda took over from British rule, his government chose an ideology: Zambian humanism. It was a form of African Socialism, which combined traditional African values with Western socialist and Christian values. This ideology was eventually declared Zambian national ideology and philosophy in 1967. The choice of this ideology was based on the fact that Africa had always contained much indigenous socialism which the colonialists had tried to destroy, and so the Zambian humanism was an attempt to rescue pre-colonial values and traditions and to use these as the basis on which to build the modern state. Like every other humanism, it set out to create a society that places the human person at the centre of all activity, social, economic and political. Describing the Zambian Humanism, Kaunda wrote, Zambian Humanism came from our own appreciation and understanding of our society. Zambian Humanism believes in God the Supreme Being. It believes that loving God with all our soul, all our heart, and with all our mind and strength, will make us appreciate the human being created in God's image. If we love our neighbour as we love ourselves, we will not exploit them but work together with them for the common good.

The Zambian humanism was also a Christian humanism because of the place it gives to God. Kaunda (1966) wrote, By Christian humanism, I mean that we discover all that is worth knowing about God through our fellow men (sic) and unconditional service of our fellow men is the purest form of service of God. I believe that Man must be the servant of a vision which is bigger than himself; that his path is illuminated by God's revelation and that when he shows love towards his fellow men, he is sharing the very life of God, who is Love.

Thus, Zambian humanism is Christian because of the Christian principles basic in them: the concept of God as creator, including of the human person; the dignity of the human person; the equality of human beings, regardless of position in society. And because of the context it addresses, it is referred to as a local theology.

The basic principles of the Zambian humanism were enumerated by Kaunda as follows:

- a. The human person at the centre – the human person is not defined according to his colour, nation, religion, creed, political leanings, material contribution or any matter.
- b. The dignity of the human person - Humanism teaches us to be considerate to our fellow human beings in all we say and do.
- c. Non-exploitation of Man by Man (sic) - Humanism abhors every form of exploitation of human beings.
- d. Equal opportunities for all - Humanism seeks to create an egalitarian society--that is, a society in which there is equal opportunity for self-development for all.

- e. Hard work and Self-reliance - Humanism declares that a willingness to work hard is of prime importance; without it nothing can be done anywhere.
- f. Working together - The national productivity drive must involve a communal approach to all development programs. This calls for a community and team-spirit.
- g. The extended family - under the extended family system, no old person is thrown to the dogs or to the institutions like old people's homes.
- h. Loyalty and patriotism - only in dedication and loyalty can unity subsist

Contrast legalism with self-discipline

Legalism is generally described as a strict adherence, or the principle of strict adherence, to law or prescription, especially to the letter rather than the spirit. Legalism, in Christian theology, is a usually pejorative term referring to an over-emphasis on discipline of conduct, or legal ideas, usually implying an allegation of misguided rigour, pride, superficiality, the neglect of mercy, and ignorance of the grace of God or emphasizing the letter of law at the expense of the spirit. Legalism is alleged against any view that obedience to law, not faith in God's grace, is the pre-eminent principle of redemption. On the Biblical viewpoint that redemption is not earned by works, but that obedient faith is required to enter and remain in the redeemed state.

Self-discipline is the training of oneself, usually for improvement. Self-discipline is to some extent a substitute for motivation, when one uses reason to determine the best course of action that opposes one's desires. Virtuous behavior can be described as when one's motivations are aligned with one's reasoned aims: to do what one knows is best and to do it gladly. Continent behavior, on the other hand, is when one does what one knows is best, but must do it by opposing one's motivations. Moving from continent to virtuous behavior requires training and some self-discipline.

Compare the values of the four main religious traditions in Zambia, and Zambian Humanism, with these two attitudes.

In all these four religious traditions, there is sense of legalism and self-discipline. It depends with the teachers to ensure that self-discipline is promoted above legalism.

Revision Questions

1. Illustrate different attitudes in modern Zambia to school rules, to traffic laws, to other laws and to lawyers.
2. State Jesus' summary of the Old Testament law and the new commandment.
3. Relate and explain the controversy between Jesus and some other Jews about observance of the Sabbath.
4. Show, from the New Testament letters, what the Early Christians taught about Christian attitudes to law.
5. Identify the importance of obeying religious laws

UNIT III

PRAYER

(Mathew 18: 19-20; Luke 3: 21; 4:42; 5: 16; 6: 12; 9: 16; 18 & 20; Luke 11: 1-13; 18: 1-14; 22: 40-45).

3.1. Describe various ideas about and practices of prayer in modern Zambia.

In modern Zambia with the growth of the Christian movement beyond mainline denominations, prayers and worship are both in form of liturgy and spontaneous. However spontaneous is becoming more and more practiced among Churches accompanied by individual emotional and psychological make up. Some do pray silently while others pray on top of their voices. Zambia does not have its unique style of prayer, but follows the trend in a religiously pluralistic globe.

Prayer (from the Latin *precari* "ask earnestly, beg, entreat") is an invocation or act that seeks to activate a rapport with an object of worship through deliberate communication.

Act of Prayer

Prayer can be a form of religious practice, may be either individual or communal and take place in public or in private. It may involve the use of words, song or complete silence. When language is used, prayer may take the form of a hymn, incantation, formal creedal statement, or a spontaneous utterance in the praying person. There are different forms of prayer such as petitionary prayer, prayers of supplication, thanksgiving, and praise. Prayer may be directed towards a deity, spirit, deceased person, or lofty idea, for the purpose of worshipping, requesting guidance, requesting assistance, confessing transgressions (sins) or to express one's thoughts and emotions. Thus, people pray for many reasons such as personal benefit or for the sake of others.

Some anthropologists believe that the earliest intelligent modern humans practiced a form of prayer. Today, most major religions involve prayer in one way or another; some ritualize the act of prayer, requiring a strict sequence of actions or placing a restriction on who is permitted to pray, while others teach that prayer may be practiced spontaneously by anyone at any time.

Scientific studies regarding the use of prayer have mostly concentrated on its effect on the healing of sick or injured people. Meta-studies of the studies in this field have been performed showing evidence only for no effect or a potentially small effect. For instance, a 2006 meta analysis on 14 studies concluded that there is "no discernable effect" while a 2007 systemic review of studies on intercessory prayer reported inconclusive results, noting that 7 of 17 studies had "small, but significant, effect sizes" but the review noted that the most methodologically rigorous studies failed to produce significant findings. Some studies have indicated increased medical complications in groups receiving prayer over those without. The efficacy of petition in prayer for physical healing to a deity has been evaluated in numerous other studies, with contradictory results. There has been some criticism of the way the studies were conducted.

The act of prayer is attested in written sources as early as 5000 years ago. Some anthropologists, such as Sir Edward Burnett Tylor and Sir James George Frazer, believed that the earliest

intelligent modern humans practiced something that we would recognize today as prayer.

Various spiritual traditions offer a wide variety of devotional acts. There are morning and evening prayers, graces said over meals, and reverent physical gestures. Some Christians bow their heads and fold their hands. Some Native Americans regard dancing as a form of prayer. Some Sufis whirl. Hindus chant mantras. Jewish prayer may involve swaying back and forth and bowing. Muslims practice salat (kneeling and prostration) in their prayers. Quakers keep silent. Some pray according to standardized rituals and liturgies, while others prefer extemporaneous prayers. Still others combine the two.

Friedrich Heiler is often cited in Christian circles for his systematic Typology of Prayer which lists six types of prayer: primitive, ritual, Greek cultural, philosophical, mystical, and prophetic. Some forms of prayer require a prior ritualistic form of cleansing or purification such as in ghusl and wudhu.

Prayer may be done privately and individually, or it may be done corporately in the presence of fellow believers. Prayer can be incorporated into a daily "thought life", in which one is in constant communication with a god. Some people pray throughout all that is happening during the day and seek guidance as the day progresses. This is actually regarded as a requirement in several Christian denominations, although enforcement is not possible nor desirable. There can be many different answers to prayer, just as there are many ways to interpret an answer to a question, if there in fact comes an answer. Some may experience audible, physical, or mental epiphanies. If indeed an answer comes, the time and place it comes is considered random. Some outward acts that sometimes accompany prayer are: anointing with oil; ringing a bell; burning incense or paper; lighting a candle or candles; facing a specific direction (i.e. towards Mecca or the East); making the sign of the cross. One less noticeable act related to prayer is fasting.

A variety of body postures may be assumed, often with specific meaning (mainly respect or adoration) associated with them: standing; sitting; kneeling; prostrate on the floor; eyes opened; eyes closed; hands folded or clasped; hands upraised; holding hands with others; a laying on of hands and others. Prayers may be recited from memory, read from a book of prayers, or composed spontaneously as they are prayed. They may be said, chanted, or sung. They may be with musical accompaniment or not. There may be a time of outward silence while prayers are offered mentally. Often, there are prayers to fit specific occasions, such as the blessing of a meal, the birth or death of a loved one, other significant events in the life of a believer, or days of the year that have special religious significance. Details corresponding to specific traditions are outlined below.

Criticism

One criticism of prayer is that if the petitioner is praying to a god which is omnipotent and all-knowing, it would be presumptuous for him or her to believe they understand the grand scheme of things sufficiently to pray for what is best. For example, Christopher Hitchens interprets Ambrose Bierce's definition of prayer by stating that "the man who prays is the one who thinks that god has arranged matters all wrong, but who also thinks that he can instruct god how to put them right."

Another criticism is that prayer may relieve a person of the need to take active measures to

address issues around them. Daniel Dennett states:

Surely it does the world no harm if those who can honestly do so pray for me! No, I'm not at all sure about that. For one thing, if they really wanted to do something useful, they could devote their prayer time and energy to some pressing project that they can do something about.

This potential drawback manifests in extreme forms in such cases as Christian Scientists who rely on prayers instead of seeking medical treatment for family members for easily curable conditions which later result in death.

Another challenge is that the intent for prayer may be inconsistent between petitioners: for example, one might be striving for an actual intervention while another might use prayer to feel better. In this light, Hitchens questions religious leaders who accept monies along with a prayer: "The leaders of the church know perfectly well that prayer is not intended to gratify the devout. So that, every time they accept a donation in return for some petition, they are accepting a gross negation of their faith: a faith that depends on the passive acceptance of the devout and not on their making demands for betterment."

Abrahamic Religion

Bible

In the common Bible of the Abrahamic religions, various forms of prayer appear; the most common forms being petition, thanksgiving, and worship. The longest book in the Bible is the Book of Psalms, 150 religious songs which are often regarded as prayers. Other well-known Biblical prayers include the Song of Moses (Exodus 15:1–18), the Song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1–10), and the Magnificat (Luke 1:46–55). The most recognized prayers in the Christian Bible are the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4) and Hail Mary (Luke 1:28; Luke 1:42).

Judaism

Observant Jews pray three times a day, Shacharit, Mincha, and Ma'ariv with lengthier prayers on special days, such as the Shabbat and Jewish holidays including Musaf and the reading of the Torah. The siddur is the prayerbook used by Jews all over the world, containing a set order of daily prayers. Jewish prayer is usually described as having two aspects: kavanah (intention) and keva (the ritualistic, structured elements).

The most important Jewish prayers are the Shema Yisrael ("Hear O Israel") and the Amidah ("the standing prayer").

Communal prayer is preferred over solitary prayer, and a quorum of 10 adult males (a minyan) is considered by Orthodox Judaism a prerequisite for several communal prayers.

There are also many other ritualistic prayers a Jew performs during their day, such as washing before eating bread, washing after one wakes up in the morning, and doing grace after meals.

Rationalist approach to prayer

In this view, ultimate goal of prayer is to help train a person to focus on divinity through philosophy and intellectual contemplation. This approach was taken by Maimonides and the other medieval rationalists. One example of this approach to prayer is noted by Rabbi Steven Weil, who was appointed the Orthodox Union's Executive-Vice President in 2009. He notes that the word "prayer" is a derivative of the Latin "precari", which means "to beg". The Hebrew equivalent "tefilah", however, along with its root "pelel" or its reflexive "l'hitpallel", means the act of self-analysis or self-evaluation. This approach is sometimes described as the person praying having a dialogue or conversation with God.

Educational approach to prayer

In this view, prayer is not a conversation. Rather, it is meant to inculcate certain attitudes in the one who prays, but not to influence. This has been the approach of Rabbenu Bachya, Yehuda Halevy, Joseph Albo, Samson Raphael Hirsch, and Joseph Dov Soloveitchik. This view is expressed by Rabbi Nossan Scherman in the overview to the Artscroll Siddur (p. XIII); note that Scherman goes on to also affirm the Kabbalistic view.

Kabbalistic approach to prayer

Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism) uses a series of kavanot, directions of intent, to specify the path the prayer ascends in the dialog with God, to increase its chances of being answered favorably. Kabbalists ascribe a higher meaning to the purpose of prayer, which is no less than affecting the very fabric of reality itself, restructuring and repairing the universe in a real fashion. In this view, every word of every prayer, and indeed, even every letter of every word, has a precise meaning and a precise effect. Prayers thus literally affect the mystical forces of the universe, and repair the fabric of creation.

Among Jews, this approach has been taken by the Chassidei Ashkenaz (German pietists of the Middle-Ages), the Arizal's Kabbalist tradition, Ramchal, most of Hassidism, the Vilna Gaon, and Jacob Emden.

Christianity

Christian prayers are quite varied. They can be completely spontaneous, or read entirely from a text, like the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. The most common prayer among Christians is the Lord's Prayer, which according to the gospel accounts (e.g. Matthew 6:9–13) is how Jesus taught his disciples to pray. The Lord's prayer is a model for prayers of adoration, confession and petition in Christianity.

Christians generally pray to God or to the Father. Some Christians (e.g., Catholics, Orthodox) will also ask the righteous in heaven and "in Christ," such as Virgin Mary or other saints to intercede by praying on their behalf (intercession of saints). Formulaic closures include "through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, through all the ages of ages," and "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

It is customary among Protestants to end prayers with "In Jesus' name, Amen" or "In the name of Christ, Amen." However, the most commonly used closure in Christianity is simply "Amen" (from a Hebrew adverb used as a statement of affirmation or agreement, usually translated as so be it).

In the Western or Latin Rite of the Roman Catholic Church, probably the most common is the Rosary; In the Eastern Church (the Eastern rites of the Catholic Church and Orthodox Church), the Jesus Prayer. The Jesus Prayer is also often repeated as part of the meditativehesychasm practice in Eastern Christianity.

Roman Catholic tradition includes specific prayers and devotions as acts of reparation which do not involve a petition for a living or deceased beneficiary, but aim to repair the sins of others, e.g. for the repair of the sin of blasphemy performed by others.

Other forms of prayer among Catholics would be meditative prayer, contemplative prayer and infused prayer discussed at length by Catholic Saints St. John of the Cross and St. Theresa of Jesus.

Pentecostalism

In Pentecostal congregations, prayer is often done by speaking in a foreign tongue, a practice now known as glossolalia. Practitioners of Pentecostal glossolalia may claim that the languages they speak in prayer are real foreign languages, and that the ability to speak those languages spontaneously is a gift of the Holy Spirit;however, many people outside the movement have offered alternative views. George Barton Cutten suggested that glossolalia was a sign of mental illness. Felicitas Goodman suggested that tongue speakers were under a form of hypnosis. Others suggest that it is a learned behaviour. Some of these views have allegedly been refuted.

Christian Science

Christian Science teaches that prayer is a spiritualization of thought or an understanding of God and of the nature of the underlying spiritual creation. Adherents believe that this can result in healing, by bringing spiritual reality (the "Kingdom of Heaven" in Biblical terms) into clearer focus in the human scene. The world as it appears to the senses is regarded as a distorted version of the world of spiritual ideas. Prayer can heal the distortion. Christian Scientists believe that prayer does not change the spiritual creation but gives a clearer view of it, and the result appears in the human scene as healing: the human picture adjusts to coincide more nearly with the divine reality. Christian Scientists do not practice intercessory prayer as it is commonly understood, and they generally avoid combining prayer with medical treatment in the belief that the two practices tend to work against each other. (However, the choice of healing method is regarded as a matter for the individual, and the Christian Science Church exerts no pressure on members to avoid medical treatment if they wish to avail of it as an alternative to Christian Science healing. Prayer works through love: the recognition of God's creation as spiritual, intact, and inherently lovable.

Prevalence of prayer for health

Some modalities of alternative medicine employ prayer. A survey released in May 2004 by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, part of the National Institutes of Health in the United States, found that in 2002, 43% of Americans pray for their own health, 24% pray for others' health, and 10% participate in a prayer group for their own health.

Islam

The Arabic word for prayer is *salât*, *salat* in Arabic, facing the Kaaba in Mecca, The prayer, particularly the five daily obligatory prayers, is one of the pillars of Islam. The command to ritual prayer is in the Qur'an in several chapters. The prophet Muhammed showed each Muslim the true method of offering prayers thus the same method is observed up to the present time. There is the "call for prayer" (*adhan*), where the muezzin calls for all the followers to stand together for the prayer. The prayer consists of standing, by mentioning 'Allāhu Akbar' (Allāh (God) is Great) followed by recitation of the first chapter of the Qur'an. (*Al-Fatiha*) Afterwards the person prostrates and praises God, then prostrates them-self and again praises God. The prayer ends with the following words: "Peace be with you and God's mercy". During the prayer, a Muslim cannot talk or do anything else besides pray. Certain Shi'a sects combine the mandatory five prayers into three prayers a day, providing several Hadith as supporting evidence.

Once the prayer (*Salât*) is complete, one can offer personal prayers or supplications to God for their needs. These are known as *dua*. There are many standard invocations in Arabic to be recited at various times, and for various occasions. e.g. for one's parents, after *Salât*, before eating. Muslims may also say *dua* in their own words and languages for any issue they wish to communicate with God in the hope that God will answer their prayers.

Bahá'í

Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, and `Abdu'l-Bahá have revealed many prayers for general use, and some for specific occasions, including for unity, detachment, spiritual upliftment, and healing among others. Bahá'ís are also required to recite each day one of three obligatory prayers revealed by Bahá'u'lláh. The believers have been enjoined to face in the direction of the Qiblih when reciting their Obligatory Prayer. The longest obligatory prayer may be recited at any time during the day; another, of medium length, is recited once in the morning, once at midday, and once in the evening; and the shortest can be recited anytime between noon and sunset. Bahá'ís also read from and meditate on the scriptures every morning and evening.

Eastern Religions

In contrast with Western religion, Eastern religion for the most part discards worship and places devotional emphasis on the practice of meditation alongside scriptural study. Consequently, prayer is seen as a form of meditation or an adjunct practice to meditation.

Buddhism

In certain Buddhist sects, prayer accompanies meditation. Buddhism for the most part sees prayer as a secondary, supportive practice to meditation and scriptural study. Gautama Buddha claimed that human beings possess the capacity and potential to become liberated, or Chán), prayer plays only an ancillary role. It is largely a ritual expression of wishes for success. Moreover, indeterminate buddhas are available for intercession as they reside in awoken-fields (Sanskrit: buddha-kshetra).

The *nirmānakāya* of an awoken-field is what is generally known and understood as a mandala. The opening and closing of the ring (Sanskrit: maṇḍala) is an active prayer. An active prayer is a mindful activity, an activity in which mindfulness is not just cultivated but is.[64] A common prayer is "May the merit of my practice, adorn Buddhas' Pure Lands, requite the fourfold kindness from above, and relieve the suffering of the three life-journeys below. Universally wishing sentient beings, Friends, foes, and karmic creditors, all to activate the bodhi mind, and all to be reborn in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss." The Generation Stage (Sanskrit: utpattikrama) of Vajrayana involves prayer elements.

The Tibetan Buddhism tradition emphasizes an instructive and devotional relationship to a guru; this may involve devotional practices known as guru yoga which are congruent with prayer. It also appears that Tibetan Buddhism posits the existence of various deities, but the peak view of the tradition is that the deities or yidam are no more existent or real than the continuity (Sanskrit: santana; refer mindstream) of the practitioner, environment and activity. But how practitioners engage yidam or tutelary deities will depend upon the level or more appropriately yana at which they are practicing. At one level, one may pray to a deity for protection or assistance, taking a more subordinate role. At another level, one may invoke the deity, on a more equal footing. And at a higher level one may deliberately cultivate the idea that one has become the deity, whilst remaining aware that its ultimate nature is śūnyatā. The views of the more esoteric yana are impenetrable for those without direct experience and empowerment.

Pure Land Buddhism emphasizes the recitation by devotees of prayer-like mantras, a practice often called Nembutsu. On one level it is said that reciting these mantras can ensure rebirth into a Sambhogakāya land (Sanskrit: buddha-kshetra) after bodily dissolution, a sheer ball spontaneously co-emergent to a buddha's enlightened intention. According to Shinran, the founder of the Pure Land Buddhism tradition that is most prevalent in the US, "for the long haul nothing is as efficacious as the Nembutsu." On another, the practice is a form of meditation aimed at achieving realization.

But beyond all these practices the Buddha emphasized the primacy of individual practice and experience. He said that supplication to gods or deities was not necessary. Nevertheless, today many lay people in East Asian countries pray to the Buddha in ways that resemble Western prayer—asking for intervention and offering devotion.

Hinduism

Hinduism has incorporated many kinds of prayer (Sanskrit: prārthanā), from fire-based rituals to philosophical musings. While chanting involves 'by dictum' recitation of timeless verses or verses with timings and notations, dhyānam involves deep meditation (however short or long) on

the preferred deity/God. Again the object to which prayers are offered could be a persons referred as devtas, trinity or incarnation of either devtas or trinity or simply plain formless meditation as practiced by the ancient sages. All of these are directed to fulfilling personal needs or deep spiritual enlightenment. Ritual invocation was part and parcel of the Vedic religion and as such permeated their sacred texts. Indeed, the highest sacred texts of the Hindus, the Vedas, are a large collection of mantras and prayer rituals. Classical Hinduism came to focus on extolling a single supreme force, Brahman, that is made manifest in several lower forms as the familiar gods of the Hindu pantheon. Hindus in India have numerous devotional movements. Hindus may pray to the highest absolute God Brahman, or more commonly to Its three manifestations namely creator god called Brahma, preserver god called Vishnu and destroyer god (so that the creation cycle can start afresh) Shiva, and at the next level to Vishnu's avatars (earthly appearances) Rama and Krishna or to many other male or female deities. Typically, Hindus pray with their hands (the palms) joined together in pranam. The hand gesture is similar to the popular Indian greeting namaste.

Jainism

Although Jainism believes that no spirit or divine being can assist them on their path, these figures do hold some influence on believers, and on special occasions, Jains will pray for right knowledge to the twenty-four Tirthankaras or sometimes to deities such as Ganesha or protectors such as the Yakshas and Yakshinis.

Shinto

The practices involved in Shinto prayer are heavily influenced by Buddhism; Japanese Buddhism has also been strongly influenced by Shinto in turn. The most common and basic form of devotion involves throwing a coin, or several, into a collection box, ringing a bell, clapping one's hands, and contemplating one's wish or prayer silently. The bell and hand clapping are meant to wake up or attract the attention of the kami of the shrine, so that one's prayer may be heard.

Shinto prayers quite frequently consist of wishes or favors asked of the kami, rather than lengthy praises or devotions. Unlike in certain other faiths, it is not considered irregular or inappropriate to ask favors of the kami in this way, and indeed many shrines are associated with particular favors, such as success on exams.

In addition, one may write one's wish on a small wooden tablet, called an ema, and leave it hanging at the shrine, where the kami can read it. If the wish is granted, one may return to the shrine to leave another ema as an act of thanksgiving.

Sikhism

The Ardās (Punjabi) is a Sikh prayer that is done before performing or after undertaking any significant task; after reciting the daily Banis (prayers); or completion of a service like the Paath (scripture reading/recitation), kirtan (hymn-singing) program or any other religious program. In Sikhism, these prayers are also said before and after eating. The prayer is a plea to God to support and help the devotee with whatever he or she is about to undertake or has done.

The Ardas is usually always done standing up with folded hands. The beginning of the Ardas is strictly set by the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh. When it comes to conclusion of this prayer, the devotee uses words like "Waheguru please bless me in the task that I am about to undertake" when starting a new task or "Akal Purakh, having completed the hymn-singing, we ask for your continued blessings so that we can continue with your memory and remember you at all times", etc. The word "Ardās" is derived from Persian word 'Arazdashat', meaning a request, supplication, prayer, petition or an address to a superior authority.

Ardās is a unique prayer based on the fact that it is one of the few well-known prayers in the Sikh religion that was not written in its entirety by the Gurus. The Ardās cannot be found within the pages of the Guru Granth Sahib because it is a continually changing devotional text that has evolved over time in order for it to encompass the feats, accomplishments, and feelings of all generations of Sikhs within its lines. Taking the various derivation of the word Ardās into account, the basic purpose of this prayer is an appeal to Waheguru for his protection and care, as well as being a plea for the welfare and prosperity of all mankind, and a means for the Sikhs to thank Waheguru for all that he has done.

Taoism

Taoism in its earliest form, before being influenced by the arrival of Buddhism in China, was a philosophy rather than a religion. In Taoism there is no deity to pray to, there is only the Tao. In practice Taoists seek to connect with, become one with and embody the Tao in everyday life. This often involves meditative practices including martial, healing and other arts such as Fulu, which is the drawing and writing of supernatural talismans.

Taoism is often blended with other practices such as ancestor worship, which can give rise to prayer directed at the ancestors or other deceased historical figures.

Animism

Although prayer in its literal sense is not used in animism, communication with the spirit world is vital to the animist way of life. This is usually accomplished through a shaman who, through a trance, gains access to the spirit world and then shows the spirits' thoughts to the people. Other ways to receive messages from the spirits include using astrology or contemplating fortune tellers and healers. The native religions in some parts of North, East and South Asia, America, Africa, and Oceania are often animistic.

Approaches to Prayer

Direct petitions to God

From Biblical times to today, the most common form of prayer is to directly appeal to God to grant one's requests. This in many ways is the simplest form of prayer. Some have termed this the social approach to prayer. In this view, a person directly enters into God's rest, and asks for their needs to be fulfilled. God listens to the prayer, and may so or not choose to answer in the way one asks of him. This is the primary approach to prayer found in the Hebrew Bible, the New

Testament, most of the Church writings, and in rabbinic literature such as the Talmud.

Educational approach

In this view, prayer is not a conversation. Rather, it is meant to inculcate certain attitudes in the one who prays, but not to influence. Among Jews, this has been the approach of Rabbenu Bachya, Rabbi Yehuda Halevi, Joseph Albo, Samson Raphael Hirsch, and Joseph B. Soloveitchik. This view is expressed by Rabbi Nosson Scherman in the overview to the Artscroll Siddur

Among Christian theologians, E.M. Bounds stated the educational purpose of prayer in every chapter of his book, *The Necessity of Prayer*. Prayer books such as the Book of Common Prayer are both a result of this approach and an exhortation to keep it.

Rationalist approach

In this view, the ultimate goal of prayer is to help train a person to focus on divinity through philosophy and intellectual contemplation. This approach was taken by the Jewish scholar and philosopher Maimonides and the other medieval rationalists; it became popular in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic intellectual circles, but never became the most popular understanding of prayer among the laity in any of these faiths. In all three of these faiths today, a significant minority of people still hold to this approach.

Experiential approach

In this approach, the purpose of prayer is to enable the person praying to gain a direct experience of the recipient of the prayer (or as close to direct as a specific theology permits). This approach is very significant in Christianity and widespread in Judaism (although less popular theologically). In Eastern Orthodoxy, this approach is known as hesychasm. It is also widespread in Sufi Islam, and in some forms of mysticism. It has some similarities with the rationalist approach, since it can also involve contemplation, although the contemplation is not generally viewed as being as rational or intellectual. Christian and Roman Catholic traditions also include an experiential approach to prayer within the practice of *Lectio Divina*, historically a Benedictine practice in which scripture is read aloud; actively meditated upon using the intellect (but not analysis) possibly using the mind to place the listener within a relationship or dialogue with the text that was read; a prayer spoken; and finally concludes with contemplation, a more passive experiential approach than the previous meditation, which is characterized by the Catechism of the Catholic Church as an experience of consciously being attentive, and having a silent love toward God, which the individual experiences without demanding to receive an experience. The experience of God within Christian mysticism has been contrasted with the concept of experiential religion or mystical experience because of a long history of authors living and writing about experience with the divine in a manner that identifies God as unknowable and ineffable, the language of such ideas could be characterized paradoxically as "experiential", as well as without the phenomena of experience.

Origins of an idea of prayer as "experiential"

The notion of "religious experience" can be traced back to William James, who used a term called "religious experience" in his book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. The origins of the use of this term can be dated further back.

In the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, several historical figures put forth very influential views that religion and its beliefs can be grounded in experience itself. While Kant held that moral experience justified religious beliefs, John Wesley in addition to stressing individual moral exertion thought that the religious experiences in the Methodist movement (paralleling the Romantic Movement) were foundational to religious commitment as a way of life.

Wayne Proudfoot traces the roots of the notion of "religious experience" to the German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), who argued that religion is based on a feeling of the infinite. The notion of "religious experience" was used by Schleiermacher and Albert Ritschl to defend religion against the growing scientific and secular critique, and defend the view that human (moral and religious) experience justifies religious beliefs.

Such religious empiricism would be later seen as highly problematic and was — during the period in-between world wars — famously rejected by Karl Barth. In the 20th century, religious as well as moral experience as justification for religious beliefs still holds sway. Some influential modern scholars holding this liberal theological view are Charles Raven and the Oxford physicist/theologian Charles Coulson.

General criticism arising from the concept of "experiential prayer"

The notion of "experience" has been criticised. Robert Sharf points out that "experience" is a typical Western term, which has found its way into Asian religiosity via western influences. The notion of "experience" introduces a false notion of duality between "experiencer" and "experienced", whereas the essence of kensho is the realisation of the "non-duality" of observer and observed. "Pure experience" does not exist; all experience is mediated by intellectual and cognitive activity. The specific teachings and practices of a specific tradition may even determine what "experience" someone has, which means that this "experience" is not the proof of the teaching, but a result of the teaching. A pure consciousness without concepts, reached by "cleaning the doors of perception", would be an overwhelming chaos of sensory input without coherence.

Transformative approach

In this approach, prayer enables an existential transformation in the person praying. The act of praying elicits a new kind of understanding which wasn't apparent before praying. The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard wrote that "the function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays."

Prayer groups

A prayer group is a group of people that meet to pray together. These groups, formed mostly within Christian congregations but occasionally among Muslim groups as well, gather outside of the congregation's regular worship service to pray for perceived needs, sometimes within the congregation, sometimes within their religious group at large. However, these groups often pray also for the world around them, including people who do not share their beliefs.

Many prayer group meetings are held according to a regular schedule, usually once a week. However, extraordinary events, such as a national disaster or major disasters spawned a number of improvised prayer group meetings. Prayer groups do not need to meet in person, and there are a vast array of single-purpose prayer groups in the world.

Prayer requests

A prayer request is a religious practice in which personal requests for others, including organized prayer groups, to pray on behalf of the requester for any specific reasons. Requests are often collected in order to act upon them either as an organized prayer gathering or as individuals.

Prayer healing

Prayer is often used as a means of faith healing in an attempt to use religious or spiritual means to prevent illness, cure disease, or improve health. Some attempt to heal by prayer, mental practices, spiritual insights, or other techniques, claiming they can summon divine or supernatural intervention on behalf of the ill. Others advocate that ill people may achieve healing through prayer performed by themselves. According to the varied beliefs of those who practice it, faith healing may be said to afford gradual relief from pain or sickness or to bring about a sudden "miracle cure", and it may be used in place of, or in tandem with, conventional medical techniques for alleviating or curing diseases. Faith healing has been criticized on the grounds that those who use it may delay seeking potentially curative conventional medical care. This is particularly problematic when parents use faith healing techniques on children.

Efficacy of prayer healing

To pray over an individual while laying hands on them is a form of faith healing in Christianity. In 1872, Francis Galton conducted a famous statistical experiment to determine whether prayer had a physical effect on the external environment. Galton hypothesized that if prayer was effective, members of the British Royal family would live longer, given that thousands prayed for their wellbeing every Sunday. He therefore compared longevity in the British Royal family with that of the general population, and found no difference. While the experiment was probably intended to satirize, and suffered from a number of confounders, it set the precedent for a number of different studies, the results of which are contradictory.

Two studies claimed that patients who are being prayed for recover more quickly or more frequently although critics have claimed that the methodology of such studies are flawed, and the perceived effect disappears when controls are tightened. One such study, with a double-

blind design and about 500 subjects per group, was published in 1988; it suggested that intercessory prayer by born again Christians had a statistically significant positive effect on a coronary care unit population. Critics contend that there were severe methodological problems with this study. Another such study was reported by Harris et al. Critics also claim that the 1988 study was not fully double-blinded, and that in the Harris study, patients actually had a longer hospital stay in the prayer group, if one discounts the patients in both groups who left before prayers began, although the Harris study did demonstrate the prayed for patients on average received lower course scores (indicating better recovery).

One of the largest randomized, blind clinical trials was a remote retroactive intercessory prayer study conducted in Israel by Leibovici. This study used 3393 patient records from 1990–96, and blindly assigned some of these to an intercessory prayer group. The prayer group had shorter hospital stays and duration of fever.

Several studies of prayer effectiveness have yielded null results. A 2001 double-blind study of the Mayo Clinic found no significant difference in the recovery rates between people who were (unbeknownst to them) assigned to a group that prayed for them and those who were not. Similarly, the MANTRA study conducted by Duke University found no differences in outcome of cardiac procedures as a result of prayer. In another similar study published in the American Heart Journal in 2006, Christian intercessory prayer when reading a scripted prayer was found to have no effect on the recovery of heart surgery patients; however, the study found patients who had knowledge of receiving prayer had slightly higher instances of complications than those who did not know if they were being prayed for or those who did not receive prayer. Another 2006 study suggested that prayer actually had a significant negative effect on the recovery of cardiac bypass patients, resulting in more frequent deaths and slower recovery time for those patient who received prayers.

Many believe that prayer can aid in recovery, not due to divine influence but due to psychological and physical benefits. It has also been suggested that if a person knows that he or she is being prayed for it can be uplifting and increase morale, thus aiding recovery. (See Subject-expectancy effect.) Many studies have suggested that prayer can reduce physical stress, regardless of the god or gods a person prays to, and this may be true for many worldly reasons. According to a study by Centra State Hospital, "the psychological benefits of prayer may help reduce stress and anxiety, promote a more positive outlook, and strengthen the will to live." Other practices such as yoga, t'ai chi, and meditation may also have a positive impact on physical and psychological health.

Others feel that the concept of conducting prayer experiments reflects a misunderstanding of the purpose of prayer. The previously mentioned study published in the American Heart Journal indicated that some of the intercessors who took part in it complained about the scripted nature of the prayers that were imposed to them, saying that this is not the way they usually conduct prayer:

Prior to the start of this study, intercessors reported that they usually receive information about the patient's age, gender and progress reports on their medical condition; converse with family members or the patient (not by fax from a third party); use individualized prayers of their own choosing; and pray for a variable time period based on patient or family request.

One scientific movement attempts to track the physical effects of prayer through neuroscience. Leaders in this movement include Andrew Newberg, an Associate Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. In Newberg's brain scans, monks, priests, nuns and gurus alike have exceptionally focused attention and compassion sites. This is a result of the frontal lobe of the brain's engagement (Newberg, 2009). Newberg believes that anybody can connect to the supernatural with practice. Those without religious affiliations benefit from the connection to the metaphysical as well. Newberg also states that further evidence towards humans' need for metaphysical relationships is that as science had increased spirituality has not decreased. Newberg believes that at the end of the 18th century, when the scientific method began to consume the human mind, religion could have vanished. However, two hundred years later, the perception of spirituality, in many instances, appears to be gaining in strength (2009). Newberg's research also provides the connection between prayer and meditation and health. By understanding how the brain works during religious experiences and practices Newberg's research shows that the brain changes during these practices allowing an understanding of how religion affects psychological and physical health (2009). For example, brain activity during meditation indicates that people who frequently practice prayer or meditation experience lower blood-pressure, lower heart rates, decreased anxiety, and decreased depression.

3.2. Illustrate from Luke's Gospel, Jesus' practice of private prayer. Luke 11: 1-13. State and explain the prayer Jesus taught to his disciples.

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."

2 He said to them, "When you pray, say:

"Father, hallowed be your name, □ your kingdom come.

3 Give us each day our daily bread.

4 Forgive us our sins, □ for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation."

5 Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; 6 a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' 7 And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' 8 I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

The Theology of the Lord's Prayer

“AS CHRIST hath commanded and taught, Christians are bold to say: ‘Our Father. . . .’” So runs the old liturgical formula, stressing the Pater Noster as a command and its use as a daring, trembling, holy boldness. At one level, this is entirely appropriate. At another level, however, it fails to catch the most remarkable thing about the Lord’s Prayer — and so fails to grasp the truly distinctive feature in Christian prayer that this prayer points us to. For the Lord’s Prayer is not so much a command as an invitation: an invitation to share in the prayer-life of Jesus himself.

Seen with Christian hindsight — more specifically, with trinitarian perspective — the Lord’s Prayer becomes an invitation to share in the divine life itself. It becomes one of the high roads into the central mystery of Christian salvation and Christian existence: that the baptized and believing Christian is (1) incorporated into the inner life of the triune God and (2) intended not just to believe that this is the case, but actually to experience it.

The Lord’s Prayer, along with the Eucharist, forms the liturgical equivalent to what Eastern Orthodox church architecture portrays and western Gothic architecture depicts — both developing, each in its own way, the central temple theology of Judaism. The God worshiped here, says this architecture, is neither a remote dictator nor simply the sum total of human god-awareness. This God is both intimately present within the world and utterly beyond, other, and different from it. He is present to celebrate with his people and to grieve with them, to give them his rich blessings and to rescue them from all ills, because he is also sovereign over heaven and earth, sea and dry land, all the powers of this world, and even over the urgings of the human heart. The Lord’s Prayer is an invitation to know this God and to share his innermost life.

All this is so, more particularly, because the Lord’s Prayer is the “true Exodus” prayer of God’s people. Set originally in a thoroughgoing eschatological context, its every clause resonates with Jesus’ announcement that God’s kingdom is breaking into the story of Israel and the world, opening up God’s long-promised new world and summoning people to share it. If this context is marginalized — or regarded as of historical interest only (because, for instance, as some would suggest, the Parousia did not arrive on schedule) — the prayer loses its peculiar force and falls back into a generalized petition for things to improve, albeit still admittedly to God’s glory. In order for it to be prayed with anything approaching full authenticity, therefore, it is necessary to be grasped afresh by the eschatological vision and message of Jesus himself, who announced the true Exodus, the real return from exile, and all that is implied by these wide-ranging shorthand expressions.

This article begins, therefore, with some reflections on the rootedness of the Lord’s Prayer within the ministry and kingdom announcement of Jesus. This will lead to a fuller exposition of the way in which the Lord’s Prayer opens up the heart of Jesus’ “New Exodus” project and invites those who so pray to become part of it. And this will then lead to some reflections on the shape and content of Christian liturgical praying and private praying, and, finally, to some concluding remarks moving on from the “Our Father” of Jesus’ ministry to the Abba cry of which Paul speaks in Galatians

4 and Romans 8.

1. The Lord's Prayer and Jesus' Own Prayer

Life References to Jesus' own practice of private prayer are scattered throughout the Gospels and clearly reflect an awareness on the part of his first followers that this kind of private prayer — not simply formulaic petitions, but wrestling with God over real issues and questions — formed the undercurrent of his life and public work. The prayer that Jesus gave his followers embodies his own prayer life and his wider kingdom ministry in every clause.

Father/Our Father

Jesus' own address to God, it appears, regularly included "Father." Though the Aramaic word *Abba* is only found in the Gospels in the Gethsemane narrative at Mark 14:36, there is a broad consensus (1) that Jesus indeed used this word in prayer, and (2) that the notion of God's fatherhood — though, of course, known also in Judaism — took central place in his own attitude to God in a distinctive way. So when the prayer given to his followers begins with "Father" (Luke 11:2) or "Our Father" (Matt. 6:9; cf. *Didache* 8:2-3, which also begins "Our Father"), we must understand that Jesus wants them to see themselves as sharing his own characteristic spirituality — that is, his own intimate, familial approach to the Creator. The idea of God's fatherhood, and of building this concept into the life of prayer, was not, as must again be stressed, a novelty within Judaism. But the centrality and particular emphasis that Jesus gave it represents a new departure.

Hallowed Be Your Name

The sanctifying of God's name, as in the clause "hallowed be your name" (Luke 11:2; Matt. 6:9), is not a major theme in the Gospels. Where it does occur — as, for example, in Mary's exclamation, "Holy is his name!" (Luke 1:49); or Jesus' prayer, "Father, glorify your name," and the Father's response, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again" (John 12:28) — it appears as a natural, and typically Jewish, affirmation of God's holiness and majesty. But the hallowing or sanctifying of God's name is thoroughly consistent with the sort of work that Jesus conceived himself to be undertaking.

Your Kingdom Come

The coming of God's kingdom, however, as expressed by the petition "your kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10/Luke 11:2), is a major theme throughout the entire Gospel tradition. And though its interpretation has sometimes been controversial, there is no doubt (1) that Jesus made this the central theme of his proclamation and (2) that he meant by it that the long-awaited kingdom or rule of God, which involved the salvation of Israel, the defeat of evil, and the return of YHWH himself to Zion, was now at last happening.

Inaugurated eschatology, or the presence and the future of God's kingdom, was a hallmark of Jesus' public career — as it was, probably, of the Teacher of Righteousness a century or more earlier and of Simeon ben-Kosiba a hundred years later. Where the leader, God's chosen one, was present, the kingdom was already present. But there was, of course, still work to be done, redemption to be won. The present and the future did not cancel one another out, as in some unthinking scholarly constructions. Nor did “present” mean “a private religious experience” and “future” mean “a Star Wars-type apocalyptic scenario.”

The presence of the kingdom meant that God's anointed Messiah was here and was at work — that he was, in fact, accomplishing, as events soon to take place would show, the sovereign and saving rule of God. The future of the kingdom was the time when justice and peace would embrace one another and the whole world — the time from which perspective one could look back and see that the work had, indeed, begun with the presence and work of the anointed leader

To pray “your kingdom come” at Jesus' bidding, therefore, meant to align oneself with his kingdom movement and to seek God's power in furthering its ultimate fulfillment. It meant adding one's own prayer to the total performance of Jesus' agenda. It meant celebrating in the presence of God the fact that the kingdom was already breaking in, and looking eagerly for its consummation. From the centrality of the kingdom in his public proclamation and the centrality of prayer in his private practice, we must conclude that this kingdom prayer grew directly out of and echoed Jesus' own regular praying.

Your Will Be Done

The performance of God's will, as voiced in the entreaty “your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10) — whether one sees that clause as subordinate to the clause “your kingdom come” (Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2) or as distinct — chimes in with the emphasis of Jesus at several points in his recorded work. This is particularly noticeable in John's Gospel. But it finds many echoes in the Synoptic Gospels, not least in Luke's repetition of how God's will must be fulfilled.

Give Us Today Our Daily Bread

The prayer for bread, as in “give us today [or, ‘day by day’] our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11; Luke 11:3), awakens echoes that resound throughout Jesus' public ministry. The two evangelists who give us the Lord's Prayer also give us the temptation stories, where Jesus' hunger and his refusal to create bread for himself feature prominently (cf. Matt. 4:2-4; Luke 4:2-3). The wilderness feeding stories suggest both a literal feeding and a symbolic act that demonstrated God's power, operative through Jesus, to provide for the needs of the people (cf. Mark 6:32-44 par.; 8:1-10 par.). Jesus' own prayers of

thanks on these occasions (cf. Mark 6:41 par.; 8:6 par.; see also Luke 24:30) are translated by the Lord's Prayer into a trustful prayer for God's regular provision.

One of the most securely established features of Jesus' public ministry in recent discussion, with only an occasional dissenter (e.g., D. C. Allison Jr., *Jesus of Nazareth*), is his frequent participation in the festive meals of his day, where he celebrated the kingdom with all comers. One does not have to go all the way with the members of the Jesus Seminar, who have described Jesus as "the proverbial party animal," in order to appreciate that the sharing of food, both actually and symbolically, was a central feature of his life.

The sequence of meals in the story of Jesus reaches its climax, of course, in the Last Supper. The bread there was — again in the context of prayer — given a special meaning, which echoes back throughout Jesus' lifetime and on to the cross and his resurrection. To pray for bread (whether for "today," as in Matthew, or for "day by day," as in Luke), therefore, is once again to align oneself with one of the most central and practical symbols of Jesus' kingdom work. Bread follows from and symbolizes the kingdom, both in the Lord's Prayer and in Jesus' own career.

Forgive Us Our Debts/Sins

The prayer for forgiveness — "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. 6:12); "forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us" (Luke 11:4) — is the one instance of a prayer Jesus taught his followers to pray that they did not suppose he needed to pray himself. The well-known scene of John the Baptist's initial objection to baptizing Jesus (Matt. 3:14-15) and the very early tradition of Jesus' personal sinlessness (cf. John 7:18; 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22) bear witness to the great divide at this point between Jesus and his followers. They needed to repent and seek God's forgiveness, but he did not.

This exception, however, clearly proves the rule that the Lord's Prayer was intended by Jesus to bind his followers closely to the agenda of his whole ministry. Forgiveness, which is offered freely and without recourse to the temple system, was another hallmark of Jesus' work — indeed, so much so that it was the cause of scandal (as, e.g., in Mark 2:5-12). Furthermore, there is good reason to think that Jesus regarded this free offer of forgiveness as a central part of his inauguration of the new covenant, and that he saw the corresponding obligation to mutual forgiveness as a necessary badge of membership. This prayer for forgiveness, therefore, though not aligning itself with anything in Jesus' own spirituality, belongs very closely with the total picture of Jesus' public ministry, as his ministry is set out in the Gospel narratives.

Lead Us Not into Temptation, but Deliver Us from the Evil One

With the prayer about deliverance from temptation (peirasmos) and the evil one (ho poneros) of Matt. 6:13, we are back again with Jesus. Again, the temptation narratives of Matt. 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13 are close at hand as part of the context; and again, the Gethsemane scene and the complex of “trials” before Caiaphas and Pilate offer themselves as the wider setting.

Jesus’ whole public career was marked by “trials” of one sort or another — by what he, and the evangelists, saw as a running battle with the powers of evil, whether in the form of possessed souls shrieking in the synagogues or angry souls challenging in the marketplace. The fact that Jesus was not spared these trials, but had to face them at their fiercest, suggests a clue as to the meaning of this controversial clause, which we will pursue later.

Here in the prayer of deliverance is, once again, one of the clearest overtones in the Lord’s Prayer: “Let me be as my Master.” “You are those,” says Jesus in Luke 22:28, “who have continued with me in my trials (entoispeirasmoismou).” So in giving this prayer, Jesus is inviting his followers to share his own struggles and to experience the same spirituality that sustained him.

This brief survey is enough to demonstrate that the Lord’s Prayer is by no means simply a collage of vaguely suitable material culled from the liturgical culture of Second Temple Judaism. Its shape and content remind us of the public career of Jesus at every point. And since Jesus’ public career was solidly rooted and reflected in his own life of prayer, we must conclude that the Lord’s Prayer is an invitation to share Jesus’ own prayer life — and with it his agenda, his work, his pattern of life, and his spirituality. The Lord’s Prayer marks out Jesus’ followers as a distinct group not simply because Jesus gave it to them, but because it encapsulates his own mission and vocation. And it does this in a form appropriate for his followers, which turns them into his co-workers and fellow-laborers in prayer for the kingdom.

Of course, if one thinks of Jesus simply as a great human teacher, then summoning his followers to share his own pattern and style of prayer is a reasonable commonplace. But if we accept the early Christian assessment of Jesus — with its dramatically high, though still Jewish, Christology — what has been said so far strongly implies that here within the Lord’s Prayer we are meeting the beginnings of trinitarian soteriology: the Son is inviting his followers to share the intimacy of his own life with the Father.

2. People of the New Exodus

All of what we have set out above, however, leads us to the present, main section of this article. In this section the theses will be proposed (1) that Jesus saw his kingdom work in terms of the much-hoped-for “New Exodus,” and (2) that the Lord’s Prayer encapsulates this vision.

The Lord’s Prayer as Encapsulating and Celebrating a New Exodus Vision

The events of Israel’s Exodus from Egypt, the people’s wilderness wanderings, and

their entry into the promised land were of enormous importance in the self-understanding and symbolism of all subsequent generations of Israelites, including Jews of the Second Temple period. The geographical “return” of the nation from exile, however, had not been matched by the fulfillment of the promises that Israel would be free from pagan domination and free to serve YHWH in her own land. When that happened, it was expected that the Exodus would form the backdrop for that much-longed-for real return from exile.

When YHWH restored the fortunes of Israel, it would be like a new Exodus — a new and greater liberation from an enslavement greater than that in Egypt. There are signs of this theme scattered liberally throughout the Gospels. The reported conversation of Moses and Elijah with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration in Luke 9:31, where the focus of their discussion is on Jesus’ “exodus” that he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem, is one prominent example of this theme. And the Lord’s Prayer can best be seen in this light as well — that is, as the prayer of the new wilderness wandering people.

Typological correspondences between the Exodus of Israel’s memory and the New Exodus of Christian proclamation are complex, and should not be pressed for exact one-to-one correspondences. That is not how this sort of thing works. Nonetheless, it may be reasonably claimed that for the evangelists — and arguably for Jesus himself — the equivalent of the crossing of the Red Sea is the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Last Supper is the Passover meal that anticipates, and gives meaning to, the great act of liberation. From that point of view, the wilderness wandering, led by the pillar of cloud and fire, does not occur until the post-Easter period — where exactly this theme is picked up, as we will see, by Paul in Romans 8.

There are some signs, indeed, that Jesus saw the period of his ministry as, at least in certain respects, parallel to that of Moses at the court of Pharaoh. Luke 11:20, for example, alluding to Exod. 8:19, portrays Jesus as saying: “If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.” The parallel in Matt. 12:28 has “spirit” for “finger,” so it is, of course, possible that Luke deliberately created an Exodus allusion in a Jesus saying where it was not originally present. But even if an accumulation of such points were held to prove that Jesus regarded his followers prior to Calvary and Easter as still “in Egypt,” I would still argue that the Lord’s Prayer was designed to constitute them as “Exodus People,” “Freedom People” — indeed, as “New Covenant People.”

The Lord’s Prayer, in fact, was designed to encapsulate and celebrate, in the presence of God, the liberation that had already begun to take place and that had yet to be completed. It was designed to enable Jesus’ followers to beseech the Father that they would be enabled to remain loyal to his freedom purposes through all the tribulations that lay ahead. This can be seen more particularly as we look again at each of the clauses of the Lord’s Prayer from a New Exodus perspective.

Father/Our Father

In highlighting echoes from the Exodus tradition in the Lord's Prayer, we must begin, of course, with "Father": "Israel is my son, my firstborn; let my people go, that they may serve me" (Exod. 4:22-23); "When Israel was a child I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son" (Hos. 11:1). Calling God "Father" not only evokes all kinds of associations of family life and intimacy; more importantly, it speaks to all subsequent generations of God as the God of the Exodus, the God who rescues Israel precisely because Israel is God's firstborn son. The title Father says as much about Israel, and about the events through which God will liberate Israel, as it does about God.

Jesus' own sense of vocation, that of accomplishing the New Exodus, was marked principally by his awareness of God as Father. Now in the Lord's Prayer he invites his followers to consider themselves Exodus people. Their cry for redemption will be heard and answered.

Hallowed Be Your Name

God revealed himself to Moses in the burning bush, speaking his name and giving it as the main reason why he could be trusted to bring the children of Israel out of captivity (cf. Exod. 3:13-16). And it was the honor and reputation of YHWH's name that Moses would subsequently use as the fulcrum in his great prayer for Israel's forgiveness after the episode of the golden calf — a theme that was also picked up by Joshua after the debacle at Ai (cf. Exod. 32:11-14; Josh. 7-9). The sanctifying of God's name, in other words, has to do once more not merely with God's own reputation in, as it were, a private capacity, but with the fact that he is committed to and in covenant with the people of Israel. To pray that God's name be hallowed, therefore, is to pray that the Exodus may not only happen but be followed through to its proper conclusion — that is, that Israel be redeemed not only from the original slavery of Egypt, but also from the sin and rebellion that keeps her from arriving and safely settling in the promised land.

Your Kingdom Come

The sovereign rule of the one true God is, of course, the main subtext of the battle between Moses and Pharaoh. As with Elijah and the prophets of Baal, the story of the Exodus is a story about which God is the stronger. It is in deliberate evocation of the Exodus theme that Isa. 52:7-10 writes of the great return:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace; who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see YHWH returning to Zion. . . . YHWH has made bare his holy arm before all the nations; all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

The Exodus is the background; the great return the foreground; the kingdom of YHWH the main theme. This is the context of Jesus' own kingdom announcement, the setting

that gives meaning to the kingdom clause in the Lord's Prayer.

Your Will Be Done

The doing of YHWH's will on earth as in heaven is, of course, part of the whole apocalyptic theme in which heavenly truths and events become embodied in their earthly counterparts. Part of the point of the whole Sinai theophany — the central part, in fact, of the Exodus story — was the meeting of heaven and earth, with Moses as the intermediary who went to and fro between the two spheres, so that laws and instructions made in heaven could be carried out on earth. This anticipates (or, depending on one's view of Pentateuchal origins, reflects) the temple theology in which the sanctuary was considered to be quite literally the place where heaven and earth met. If Torah was the means by which, within Israel, God's will was to be done on earth as in heaven, and if the temple was the place where this was embodied in cultic celebration and sacrifice, to pray that this might happen anew — within the context of the New Exodus motifs already so strongly present — was to pray not merely that certain things might occur within the earthly realm that would coincide with plans that God had made in the heavenly realm, but that a fresh integration of heaven and earth would take place in which all that temple and Torah had stood for would be realized afresh. It was to pray both that God's saving purpose for Israel and the world would come about through God's personal action, and that God's people would find themselves not merely shaped by a law, however divine, or focused on a building, however God-given, but embraced by a saving personal love.

"Thy will be done on earth as in heaven" can, of course, carry all sorts of further overtones, such as prayers for wise political solutions to world-shaking crises, prayers for bread for the hungry, and prayers for justice for the oppressed. But at its heart lies a prayer for the appropriate integration of heaven and earth that the early Christians came to see already accomplished in Jesus himself — who was like Moses, but so much more so — and came to long for in God's eventual future (cf. Rev. 21; see also Rom. 8:17-30, which we will discuss later).

Give Us Today Our Daily Bread

The prayer for bread has its historical background in the provision of manna in the wilderness. God's daily gift, following the people's grumbling, became the stuff of legend. Jesus' actions in the feeding miracles alluded to the wilderness stories, as the evangelists (especially John) suggest. In the context of the Lord's Prayer, this clause aligns the followers of Jesus with the wilderness generation and their need to know God's daily supply of not only literal bread but also of all that it symbolized.

Manna was not needed in Egypt. Nor would it be needed in the promised land. It is the food of inaugurated eschatology, the food that is needed because the kingdom has already broken in and because it is not yet consummated. The daily provision of manna signals that the Exodus has begun, but also that we are not yet living in the land.

Forgive Us Our Debts/Sins

The story of the manna, however, was also the story of Israel's sin and lack of faith. The prayer for forgiveness, therefore, is quite appropriate in this context, and not merely another item in a shopping-list of spiritual needs and wants. In the light of Jeremiah 31 and Jesus' offer of forgiveness as the central blessing of the new covenant — that is, the great return that was happening through his work — forgiveness is raised to a new height. If the Egypt from which the New Exodus is freeing God's people is the Egypt of sin and all that it produces, then the prayer "forgive us our sins" becomes precisely the prayer of those still in Egypt: "Deliver us from Pharaoh!"

Matthew and the Didache, of course, present Jesus as speaking of the forgiveness of debts (as in Matthew) or debt (as in the Didache). I have elsewhere agreed with those who see in this a sign of the Jubilee, and of Jesus' intention being that his followers should celebrate it amongst themselves. The Jubilee provisions, of course, look back to the fact that Israel had been enslaved in Egypt and that God had rescued and delivered her (cf. Lev. 25:38, 42, 55). They were part of the Exodus theology. In the same way, Jesus' demand that his followers should forgive one another belongs precisely within the same logic. Redeemed slaves must themselves live as redemption people. The inner connection between forgiving others and being forgiven oneself, which is so strongly emphasized in Matt.6:14-15 and 18:21-35 (cf. Sirach 28:1-7), grows directly out of this Exodus motif.

Lead Us Not into Temptation, but Deliver Us from the Evil One

In this wider context the difficulties about the clause "Do not lead us to 'the testing,'" which are reflected in current debates about the wording for liturgical use, may be addressed with some hope of success. Who is testing whom, with what intent, and with what result?

The normal assumption is that the prayer is asking to be spared having one's faith tested by God. But the tradition throughout early Christianity that sees the testing of one's faith as a necessary part of discipleship — indeed, as a following of Jesus — speaks strongly against such an understanding. Is it, then, as Albert Schweitzer thought, the eschatological *peirasmos*— the Great Tribulation, the worst moment in history — that the prayer is asking to be spared from? A strong case for this reading can be made out, and I have myself taken this line in the past.

On this view, Jesus believed that "Messianic Woes" were coming on Israel, and that it was his particular task and vocation to go out ahead and take the full weight of them on himself, so that the people would not need to undergo them. This would explain the repetition in Gethsemane of his command to his disciples: "Watch and pray, that you may not enter the *peirasmos*" (Matt. 26:41; Mark 14:38; Luke 22:46) — meaning by that command: "Pray that you may be spared this great moment of anguish; it is my task to enter it alone." (We may note, however, that when Jesus himself prayed a somewhat similar prayer the answer was "No."). And such an interpretation fits well with what I have elsewhere argued to be Jesus' perception of the

moment of crisis in which he saw himself to have a central role.

But it remains somewhat strange to see this as the complete explanation of “lead us not into temptation.” For if the early church came to believe that in some sense the great *peirasmos* had, indeed, happened to Jesus on the cross, why would they have continued to pray this clause in the Lord’s Prayer thereafter? Granted, the fall of Jerusalem, which was still in the future for those who handed on the early traditions, had been spoken of by Jesus in similarly dramatic terms, as witness Mark 13 and its parallels. But what about after that, in the period when we must assume the *Didache*, at least, to have been written — and most likely the Gospels of Matthew and Luke as well?

One possible answer, of course, is that in the days following AD 70 the church looked beyond the fall of Jerusalem to the final moment when God would redeem the whole of creation — and that such a futuristic vision included a final, yet-to-occur tribulation. But this possibility, which we can see reflected perhaps in the Book of Revelation, only sharpens the question. For then we must ask: Did the church expect to be in some sense spared the sufferings of this final tribulation? Did not salvation consist, rather, in remaining faithful within it? This, then, leads us to reconsider the Exodus tradition and to search for other possible meanings.

The most probable explanation, I propose, is that the “testing” is not God’s testing of his people but the people’s testing of God. One of the central charges against the wilderness generation was that they, in their unbelief, “put YHWH to the test” by challenging him to produce demonstrations of his presence with them (cf. Exod. 17:7). The particular issue, of course, was YHWH’s provision of water from the rock, which followed directly on the people’s grumbling about food and YHWH’s provision of manna. The deuteronomic memory of the wilderness “testings” echoes on in the prophetic traditions, with Ahaz using the old warning as an excuse not to look for the sign that Isaiah was offering (cf. Isa. 7:12; see also Ps. 78:18, 41, 56; 95:9; 106:14). In one of Paul’s alignments of the church with the wilderness generation, he cites this specifically as a central failing that the church must not emulate (cf. 1 Cor. 10:9). This was, more specifically, one of the key failings of the wilderness generation that Jesus specifically avoided during his initial temptations (cf. Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12, quoting Deut. 6:16).

The passage in Paul’s letters in which this theme finds expression — that is, 1 Cor. 10:9: “We must not test the Lord [or, ‘the Christ’] as some of them did” — also suggests that the early church had become used to taking “the *peirasmos*” in a wider sense than simply the sharply focused eschatological one. For in 1 Corinthians 10 Paul draws a close parallel between the church and the wilderness generation, speaking of that earlier generation as having been “baptized” into Moses (v. 2) and as having all eaten “spiritual food” and drunk “spiritual drink” (w. 3-4). Their testing of the Lord — or, as the preferred reading has it, of “the Christ” — was one aspect of their many-sided failure.

Nonetheless, when Paul speaks of *peirasmos* a few verses later, it is clear that he means not the Israelites' testing of God but the "temptations" that come on God's people, not least from the pagan environment in which they live. 1 Cor. 10:13 is the clearest statement of what *peirasmos* had come to mean in the early church and of how, with its Exodus overtones, it was being reapplied:

No *peirasmos* has overtaken you but that which is normal to the human race. God is faithful: he will not allow you to be tested beyond your strength. He will make, with the *peirasmos*, also the way out, so that you are able to bear it.

This can only refer to the much more general "temptation," within which the temptation to put God to the test is one, but only one.

What we see here in this reapplication of the Exodus tradition is not so much the downgrading of eschatology into moralism, but the taking up of moral instruction into typological eschatology. Paul will not rest content with simply telling the Corinthians how to behave and chiding them if they go wrong. He will teach them to think of themselves as the people of the true Exodus, and within that framework show them how the moral struggles they face — including the temptation to devise tests to see how strong their Lord is — are the equivalent of the temptations which brought the wilderness generation to ruin. They must now succeed where their typological predecessors failed.

Who, then, is the author of this "temptation" of 1 Cor. 10:13? Paul does not say directly, but the context strongly implies that it is the evil one. Despite the apostle's firm conviction regarding the sovereignty of God, such "testings" come from "the Satan" (cf. 1 Cor. 7:5; the word *peirasmos* occurs in the Pauline corpus only in 1 Cor. 10:13; Gal. 4:14; and 1 Tim. 6:9). 1 Corinthians 10, therefore, might be seen as a practical commentary on the Lord's Prayer, particularly on its concluding clauses. What Paul, in effect, is saying is: You are the Exodus generation; therefore trust God to lead you out of your moment of testing without succumbing to it — that is, to deliver you from the evil one.

If this is accepted, then we may understand the last part of the Lord's Prayer (i.e., the last two clauses in Matthew's version and the *Didache*) as follows: Jesus' followers are instructed to pray that they may be spared the great *peirasmos* that is coming on Jesus himself and the cognate tribulation that is coming on Jerusalem and the whole world. To this extent, the petition is similar to what Jesus urges in Matt. 24:20; Mark 13:18: "Pray that your flight may not be in winter."

But the petition also broadens out to include all of what Paul speaks about — that is, the variegated temptations, which, coming from "the Satan," include the temptation to put God to the test, but also include such other sins as idolatry and grumbling. Thus "Lead us not into temptation" would then mean, in that broader context, "Do not let us be led into temptation [from which we cannot escape]." The fact that God has promised to be faithful and to provide the way of escape does not mean, in the logic of New Testament prayer, that one should not pray for it, but rather the reverse. Those who pray the Lord's Prayer are designed by Jesus to be those who remain faithful to

the God who intends to remain faithful to them — and who thereby constitute the true eschatological Israel, the people of the New Exodus.

The Lord's Prayer as the Heart of the New Covenant Charter

We may now stand back briefly from this Exodus-based exposition of the Lord's Prayer and examine the results. Certain features from our investigation can be highlighted. The prayer is given by Jesus to constitute his followers as the true Exodus people. They are to succeed, not least by prayer, where the original wilderness generation failed. The prayer moves from the disciples' relation to God, through the honoring of God's name and the doing of his will, to provisions for bodily needs and dealing with evil. Furthermore, the prayer has something of the same shape — and, within the new eschatological moment, something of the same role — as the Decalogue within the Exodus narrative. Thus the Lord's Prayer may be seen as being to the church as the Ten Commandments were to Israel: not just something to do, a comparatively arbitrary rule of life, but the heart of the new covenant charter.

Of course, it is not quite as easy as that. Matthew, who one might have expected to make this point, may be thought to have hinted at it by his placing of the Lord's Prayer within the Sermon on the Mount, redolent as it is of Exodus typology. And it would be sheer folly to think that the Decalogue has no abiding significance within the church, albeit reinterpreted in various ways — just as it would be folly to suppose that Israel BC was not also commanded and invited to pray the intimate covenantal prayer, the Shema, that Jesus himself reaffirmed (though, interestingly, as ethic rather than prayer, as in Judaism; cf. Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 10:25-28). Nevertheless, there is an important point here, which is at the very heart of our investigation: If we are looking for characteristic marks of the church, the Lord's Prayer offers itself more readily than the Ten Commandments, despite the parallel use of them in some systems of Christian education, as though they were, respectively, simply a timeless prayer and a timeless moral code.

The Lord's Prayer takes its place, rather, alongside baptism and the Eucharist. Both are thought of in Exodus terms in the New Testament, not least in 1 Corinthians 10. It is, therefore, appropriate that praying the Lord's Prayer should take place corporately and publicly within the liturgies for both baptism and the Eucharist. But it is also the case that the Lord's Prayer will be most fully understood and most fully "meant" within those Exodus-based narratives, which are symbolically and dramatically acted out in their new Christ-centered form. These sacraments are precisely among those moments when — within the inaugurated eschatology through which alone Christianity makes sense — both past and future, heaven and earth, are brought together in one dramatic action.

The Lord's Prayer is the means by which the church celebrates what has been accomplished already in Christ and strains forward for what lies ahead. And in the course of living between the present and the future, the church prays in the Lord's Prayer for grace and strength to remain faithful to its Lord and not to fall away from

the bracing agenda of his kingdom announcement.

3. Prayers and Paradigms

The church that prays the Lord's Prayer claims, thereby, the status of the eschatological people of God. In so praying, it locates itself between Calvary, Easter, and Pentecost, on the one hand, and the great consummation (sometimes, by metonymy, called "the Parousia"), on the other hand. The Lord's Prayer is thus a marker, a reminder, to the church of who it is and why.

To locate oneself on this historical scale is, of course, to look with dismay at the many times when the church, like the wilderness generation, has betrayed its Lord, put its God to the test, and committed various idolatries and immoralities. But it is, at the same time, also to claim that, with the cross and resurrection of Jesus behind it, forgiveness and restoration are ever-present realities as well.

A Paradigm for the Church's Liturgy

The shape of the church's regular worship, therefore, ought to be ordered, I suggest, in ways that highlight this identity. All sorts of Christian traditions have been tempted in various ways to de-eschatologize themselves, and so to settle down into being simply a religion, with or without an accompanying moralism. It is this, perhaps, that has allowed so much contemporary thought to assume, without more ado, that Christianity is simply one "religion" among many — a view that the New Testament's characteristic eschatology would never permit.

One obvious way of keeping the church's eschatological focus would be to allow the shape as well as the content of the Lord's Prayer to inform its liturgy more strongly, not just in that part of the worship service labeled "prayer" but also in the structure of the whole. Invocation of God as Father, worship and prayer that sanctifies God's name, prayer for Jesus' kingdom work to find its complete fulfillment on earth as in heaven — all of these might come first. Intercession for particular blessings, of which bread is among the most basic and hence symbolic of the rest, would occur within this larger context.

Furthermore, we should note that, against the grain of some post-Augustinian liturgies, the church is not instructed by its Lord to approach its Father with "Sorry" as its first word. Even the Prodigal Son began his speech with "Father." There is, to be sure, an appropriate place for penitence, both for communities and individuals. But the normal Christian approach to the Creator God is the unfettered and delighted "Father." There is a time for penitence, but its location within the Lord's Prayer suggests that it should not take pride of place in regular liturgical worship.

There are, of course, some theologies still current in which all penitence is pushed to one side as gloomy or doleful. That this is a gross caricature should not need to be said. The Lord's Prayer indicates both that penitence is a regular necessity and that it

is not the most important element. Pride and paranoia are alike to be avoided.

If the Lord's Prayer is correctly understood in its New Exodus eschatological context, a liturgy that grows up on this basis is likely to choose Scripture readings in such a way as both to celebrate God's deliverance of his people and to remind the congregation that they belong within this overarching story. This does not mean the avoidance of the non-narrative parts of Scripture, such as the Book of Proverbs. But it does mean that the sequence from the Old Testament to the New has some importance, and that at some point that sequence, which gave birth to the church, should be brought into explicit focus, whether by prayer or song.

The church's task in using the Lord's Prayer as a paradigm for liturgy, therefore, is (1) to thank God for its identity as the people of the New Exodus, (2) to pray that God's achievement in Jesus Christ may reach its complete fruition for both the church and the entire creation, and (3) to pray for grace and strength to remain faithful to God's calling in the present. In so doing, the church is explicitly identifying with Jesus himself in his own prayer and work (as we have highlighted in the first section of this article) — a stance that can only be taken without gross arrogance when it is remembered that the prayer, as given by Jesus, is not simply a command but an invitation. Like a good deal in the Gospel accounts, it requires a belief in the Holy Spirit to make full sense of this picture (which is what John and Paul, in particular, supply, as we will note later in this article).

A Paradigm for Christian Living

The Christian is also called to make the Lord's Prayer paradigmatic in his or her own personal life. The context in Matthew 6 includes Jesus' command to go into one's own room, shut the door, and pray to the Father who sees in secret (6:6). (We might want to ask, how many of Jesus' original hearers had private rooms into which they could retreat, with doors by which they could shut out all others?) The life of the individual Christian is lived out between baptism and bodily death and resurrection on the same principle as the life of the corporate church. It is true, of course, that the story of Israel's wilderness wanderings has been more regularly applied to the Christian life than to church history, and the symbolism is well enough known: the crossing of the Jordan symbolizing death, and so forth — or, as in some "second blessing" traditions, altered so that the crossing of the Jordan signals an entry into a "higher life" of full sanctification. Nonetheless, the Exodus story is still a fruitful source of imagery for reconstructing a genuinely Christian spirituality.

The Lord's Prayer, as used by a Christian who is conscious of his or her pilgrimage to the eventual promised land, celebrates the great beginning of that pilgrimage when, in baptism, that individual is united with Christ in his death and resurrection. Calling God "Father" says and celebrates all of that. The early petitions of the prayer, with their focus on God's name, God's kingdom, and God's will, can all be used in this context as the framework for focusing in one's private prayer on God himself, and for claiming already in the present — as, indeed, is done in the sacraments — the

blessings of the future that are already secured in Christ. And within private prayer, as with public prayer, all of the other elements take their place: intercession, the prayer for forgiveness, and the clear-eyed plea against *peirasmos* and against the *poneros*. These all find their appropriate, though still subordinate, home. The individual Christian is called to be a man, woman, or child of prayer as a New Exodus person.

But that cannot be the whole story. For, as I said in the first section of this article, at its heart the Lord's Prayer is an invitation to each Christian to share in the praying life of Jesus himself. The early Christians were very conscious of Jesus' exalted presence before God's throne, where his constant task is to intercede on behalf of his people (cf. Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24). The Lord's Prayer, therefore, by uniting Jesus' people with their Lord in the prayer that formed the inner core of his own life, brings about the situation where those who pray it are even now, whether they realize it or not, "seated in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6; cf. Col. 3:1,3).

There are different ways of appropriately embodying this reality. Precisely because we are to pray God's kingdom into existence "on earth as it is in heaven," it is always worthwhile exploring and reflecting on those ways — including matters of place, posture, timing, musical accompaniment, and so on. These are not mere incidentals. They will, of course, vary quite widely with culture, personality, and opportunity. Such variations, however, do not suggest that there are not some more and some less appropriate outward forms and fashions. Rather, the reverse is true. Each individual Christian and every church community is responsible, under God, for not just maintaining a human tradition — or, for that matter, demolishing one — but for discovering the forms that the Lord's Prayer itself prompts and suggests within a particular culture and for the particular people who are going to be using it.

4. Abba, Father: Conformed to the Pattern of Christ

It is striking that at the two places where Paul quotes Jesus' use of *Abba*, the Aramaic word for "father," he also speaks in dramatic language of the two things that have formed the underlying structure of this article: (1) the New Exodus in Christ, and (2) the incorporation of the worshipping Christian into the inner trinitarian life of God. I conclude this article, therefore, with a brief look at these two passages and some suggestions as to what they mean for our regarding the Lord's Prayer as a paradigm of Christian praying.

In Gal. 4:1-11, as is fairly obvious though not always fully drawn out, Paul tells the story of the Exodus again. Only it is not now the Exodus from Egypt, when God sent Moses and gave the Law, but the Exodus of God's people in Christ, both Jews and Gentiles, in long-term and complete fulfillment of the promise to Abraham. Thus in verses 4-7 he says:

When the time had fully come. God sent forth his Son... to redeem... and because you are children. God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and, if a son, then an heir, through God.

As a result, as he emphasizes in verse 8-11, there can be no “going back to Egypt.” God has now been revealed, not in a burning bush but in the Son and the Spirit — or, rather, as the One who sent the Son and now sends the Spirit of the Son.

The God of the New Exodus is the God revealed as Father, Son, and Spirit. The only alternative is some kind of paganism, even if, paradoxically, it is hiding underneath the Jewish Torah. And the revelation of God as Trinity is completed in the experience of Christian prayer — that is, in the Abba, which certainly refers to Jesus’ own usage and may well refer to the practice of saying the Lord’s Prayer in the early Aramaic-speaking church.

Two reflections on the use of this Abba prayer by Christians may be of note. First, just as the Lord’s Prayer is still known as the “Pater Noster” by many Roman Catholics who actually now say it in English, so perhaps — though it can only ever be a guess — the same prayer may have continued to be known as the “Abba” by those who said it in Greek. Second, it may be asked: Is it simply a coincidence that the key prayer word of the early Christians, like some of the key prayer words of their pagan counterparts, was a palindrome (that is, a word or number that reads the same backward or forward) — indeed, one of the simplest possible palindromes?

The point, anyway, is that the Lord’s Prayer — by (1) reflecting the prayer of Jesus and inviting his followers to share it, and (2) embodying the New Exodus stance that summed up so much of Jesus’ whole agenda — is now the appropriate vehicle of a specific type of prayer. This prayer is not shouting across a void to a distant and perhaps unknown God. Nor is it simply getting in touch with one’s own deepest feelings and self-awareness. Nor is it getting in tune with the wider spirit of the whole cosmos. It is prayer that grows directly out of the Jewish experience and knowledge of the one creator God, but that finds, without leaving that Jewish base behind, that the knowledge of this one God has three intertwined aspects — not least of all because Jesus himself, as a human being, remains at the heart of it.

Rom. 8:12-30 completes the circle. Here we find the fully inaugurated, but not yet consummated, eschatology that so perfectly reflects Jesus’ own kingdom announcement, albeit seen now from the post-Easter perspective. We are saved in hope; but hope that is seen is not hope. And this salvation is precisely the New Exodus. Led by the Spirit, who here takes on the role of the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, we are called the children of God. We are no longer slaves, and must not dream of going back to Egypt. Rather, because we are those who cry “Abba, Father!” we are not only children but heirs, heirs of the true promised land.

The true promised land is not a strip of territory in the Middle East or elsewhere, nor yet “heaven” as a far-off and basically disembodied final resting place. Rather, it is the renewed creation itself. It is God’s world restored, healed, and flooded with the Spirit, sharing in the freedom that goes with the glorification of God’s children. Creation itself, in other words, will have its own Exodus. Our Exodus experience in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is both the key starting point of that long project and the guarantee that God will complete what he has started.

In the midst of all of this, the characteristic Christian prayer is that which, inspired by the Spirit, catches the Christian up in the mysterious, and even painful, dialogue of the Father and the Spirit (cf. 8:26-27). It is this that forms the Christian according to the pattern of the crucified and risen Son (cf. 8:17, 29). And it is this that constitutes Christians as “those who love God” (cf.8.28) — in other words, those who fulfill, at last, the great Exodus prayer-command of Deut. 6:4: “Hear, O Israel, YHWH our God, YHWH is one; and you shall love YHWH your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.”

The Lord’s Prayer, then, though not explicitly referred to by Paul, points on to what in many ways must be seen as the crown of early Christian theology and practice. For the Abba prayer, inspired by the Spirit of Jesus, is the characteristic Christian prayer. It encompasses within itself that celebration of God’s goodness and kingdom, that intercession for and grief over the world in pain and need, and that anguish over trials and temptations that still beset and besiege what is the normal state of Christian existence. More than all that, however, as an invitation to share in Jesus’ own prayer life and as the New Exodus prayer, it enables the baptized and believing Christian to share — humbly, wonderingly, painfully, joyfully — in the life of God himself, Father, Son, and Spirit.

In this prayers Jesus taught the following:

- a. Prayer is not a showing off thing and can take place anywhere
- b. When we pray, the focus should be on God. He comes first before our needs
- c. He has to be praised for who He is.
- d. In the prayer we admit that God nourishes our lives both physically and spiritually
- e. We should not be proud when we do not sin, He rescues us.
- f. Before God forgives us, we should show Him that we have also forgiven others.

3.4. Relate the parables of the Friend at Midnight, the Widow and the Judge,

- a. We are taught not to give up on prayer even if we do not get what we are asking for the first time. There is power in the persistence of prayer.
- b. God is faithful and He gives better things than we even ask as a father
- e. Faith is important in prayer and that is what causes persistence

The Eastern Church

The prayer has been widely taught and discussed throughout the history of the Church. It is often repeated continually as a part of personal ascetic practice, its use being an integral part of the eremitic tradition of prayer known as Hesychasm (Ancient Greek: ἡσυχάζω, hesychazo, "to keep stillness"). The prayer is particularly esteemed by the spiritual fathers of this tradition (see Philokalia) as a method of opening up the heart (kardia) and bringing about the Prayer of the Heart (Καρδιακή Προσευχή). The Prayer of The Heart is considered to be the Unceasing Prayer that the apostle Paul advocates in the New Testament. St. Theophan the Recluse regarded the Jesus Prayer stronger than all other prayers by virtue of the power of the Holy Name of Jesus. Oftentimes in Protestant faiths when praying one will breathe in during the first part "Lord Jesus

Christ, Son of God" and then they will breathe out saying "have mercy on me, the sinner".

While its tradition, on historical grounds, also belongs to the Eastern Catholics, and there have been a number of Roman Catholic texts on the Jesus Prayer, its practice has never achieved the same popularity in the Western Church as in the Eastern Orthodox Church, although it is said on the Anglican Rosary. As distinct from the prayer itself, the Eastern Orthodox theology of the Jesus Prayer enunciated in the 14th century by St. Gregory Palamas was generally rejected by Roman Catholic theologians until the 20th century, but Pope John Paul II called Gregory Palamas a saint, cited him as a great writer, and an authority on theology and spoke with appreciation of Palamas's intent "to emphasize the concrete possibility that man is given to unite himself with the Triune God in the intimacy of his heart". In the Jesus Prayer can be seen the Eastern counterpart of the Rosary, which has developed to hold a similar place in the Christian West.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says: "The name of Jesus is at the heart of Christian prayer. All liturgical prayers conclude with the words 'through our Lord Jesus Christ'. The Hail Mary reaches its high point in the words 'blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus'. The Eastern prayer of the heart, the Jesus Prayer, says: 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' Many Christians, such as St Joan of Arc, have died with the one word 'Jesus' on their lips."

Origins

The prayer's origin is most likely the Egyptian desert, which was settled by the monastic Desert Fathers in the 5th century.

A formula similar to the standard form of the Jesus Prayer is found in a letter attributed to John Chrysostom, who died in 407. This "Letter to an Abbot" speaks of "Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy" and "Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on us" being used as ceaseless prayer. However, some consider this letter dubious or spurious and attribute it to an unknown writer of unknown date.

What may be the earliest explicit reference to what became the standard version of the Jesus Prayer is in Discourse on Abba Philimon from The Philokalia. Philimon lived around AD 600. But while the prayer itself was in use by that time, John S. Romanides writes that "We are still searching the Fathers for the term 'Jesus prayer.'"

The earliest known mention is in On Spiritual Knowledge and Discrimination of St. Diadochos of Photiki (400-c. 486), a work found in the first volume of the Philokalia. The Jesus Prayer is described in Diadochos's work in terms very similar^[citation needed] to St. John Cassian's (c. 360-435) description in the Conferences 9 and 10, which gives, as the formula used in Egypt for repetitive prayer, not the Jesus Prayer, but "O God, make speed to save me: O Lord, make haste to help me." St. Diadochos ties the practice of the Jesus Prayer to the purification of the soul and teaches that repetition of the prayer produces inner peace.

The use of the Jesus Prayer is recommended in the Ladder of Divine Ascent of St. John Climacus (c. 523–606) and in the work of St. Hesychios the Priest (ca. 8th century), Pros Theodoulon, found in the first volume of the Philokalia. Ties to a similar prayer practice and theology appear

in the 14th century work of an unknown English monk *The Cloud of Unknowing*. The use of the Jesus Prayer according to the tradition of the *Philokalia* is the subject of the 19th century anonymous Russian spiritual classic *The Way of a Pilgrim*.

Though the Jesus Prayer has been practiced through the centuries as part of the Eastern tradition, in the 20th century, it also began to be used in some Western churches, including some Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.

The hesychastic practice of the Jesus Prayer is founded on the biblical view by which God's name is conceived as the place of his presence. Orthodox mysticism has no images or representations. The mystical practice (the prayer and the meditation) doesn't lead to perceiving representations of God (see below Palamism). Thus, the most important means of a life consecrated to praying is the invoked name of God, as it is emphasized since the 5th century by the Thebaid anchorites, or by the later Athonite hesychasts. For the Orthodox the power of the Jesus Prayer comes not only from its content, but from the very invocation of Jesus' name.

Scriptural roots

Theologically, the Jesus Prayer is considered to be the response of the Holy Tradition to the lesson taught by the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee, in which the Pharisee demonstrates the improper way to pray by exclaiming: "Thank you Lord that I am not like the Publican", whereas the Publican prays correctly in humility, saying "Lord have mercy on me, a sinner" (Luke 18:10-14).

Palamism, the underlying theology

The Essence-Energies distinction, a central principle in Orthodox theology, was first formulated by St Gregory of Nyssa and developed by St. Gregory Palamas in the 14th century in support of the mystical practices of Hesychasm and against Barlaam of Seminara. It stands that God's essence (Ancient Greek: Οὐσία, ousia) is distinct from God's energies, or manifestations in the world, by which men can experience the Divine. The energies are "unbegotten" or "uncreated". They were revealed in various episodes of the Bible: the burning bush seen by Moses, the Light on Mount Tabor at the Transfiguration.

Apophatism (negative theology) is the main characteristic of the Eastern theological tradition. Incognoscibility isn't conceived as agnosticism or refusal to know God, because the Eastern theology isn't concerned with abstract concepts; it is contemplative, with a discourse on things above rational understanding. Therefore dogmas are often expressed antinomically. This form of contemplation, is experience of God, illumination called the Vision of God or in Greek *theoria*.

For the Eastern Orthodox the knowledge or noesis of the uncreated energies is usually linked to apophatism.

Repentance in Eastern Orthodoxy

Christ the Redeemer by Andrei Rublev (ca. 1410, Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow).

The Eastern Orthodox Church holds a non-judicial view of sin, by contrast to the satisfaction view of atonement for sin as articulated in the West, firstly by Anselm of Canterbury (as debt of honor) and Thomas Aquinas (as a moral debt). The terms used in the East are less legalistic (grace, punishment), and more medical (sickness, healing) with less exacting precision. Sin, therefore, does not carry with it the guilt for breaking a rule, but rather the impetus to become something more than what men usually are. One repents not because one is or isn't virtuous, but because human nature can change. Repentance (Ancient Greek: *μετάνοια*, *metanoia*, "changing one's mind") isn't remorse, justification, or punishment, but a continual enactment of one's freedom, deriving from renewed choice and leading to restoration (the return to man's original state). This is reflected in the Mystery of Confession for which, not being limited to a mere confession of sins and presupposing recommendations or penalties, it is primarily that the priest acts in his capacity of spiritual father. The Mystery of Confession is linked to the spiritual development of the individual, and relates to the practice of choosing an elder to trust as his or her spiritual guide, turning to him for advice on the personal spiritual development, confessing sins, and asking advice.

As stated at the local Council of Constantinople in 1157, Christ brought his redemptive sacrifice not to the Father alone, but to the Trinity as a whole. In the Eastern Orthodox theology redemption isn't seen as ransom. It is the reconciliation of God with man, the manifestation of God's love for humanity. Thus, it is not the anger of God the Father but His love that lies behind the sacrificial death of his son on the cross.

The redemption of man is not considered to have taken place only in the past, but continues to this day through theosis. The initiative belongs to God, but presupposes man's active acceptance (not an action only, but an attitude), which is a way of perpetually receiving God.

Distinctiveness from analogues in other religions

The practice of contemplative or meditative chanting is known in several religions including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam (e.g. *japa*, *zikr*). The form of internal contemplation involving profound inner transformations affecting all the levels of the self is common to the traditions that posit the ontological value of personhood. The history of these practices, including their possible spread from one religion to another, is not well understood. Such parallels (like between unusual psycho-spiritual experiences, breathing practices, postures, spiritual guidances of elders, peril warnings) might easily have arisen independently of one another, and in any case must be considered within their particular religious frameworks.

Although some aspects of the Jesus Prayer may resemble some aspects of other traditions, its Christian character is central rather than mere "local color." The aim of the Christian practicing it is not limited to attaining humility, love, or purification of sinful thoughts, but rather it is becoming holy and seeking union with God (theosis), which subsumes all the aforementioned virtues. Thus, for the Eastern Orthodox:

- The Jesus Prayer is, first of all, a prayer addressed to God. It's not a means of self-deifying or self-deliverance, but a counterexample to Adam's pride, repairing the breach it produced between man and God.
- The aim is not to be dissolved or absorbed into nothingness or into God, or reach another state of mind, but to (re)unite with God (which by itself is a process) while remaining a

distinct person.

- It is an invocation of Jesus' name, because Christian anthropology and soteriology are strongly linked to Christology in Orthodox monasticism.
- In a modern context the continuing repetition is regarded by some as a form of meditation, the prayer functioning as a kind of mantra. However, Orthodox users of the Jesus Prayer emphasize the invocation of the name of Jesus Christ that St Hesychios describes in *Pros Theodoulon* which would be contemplation on the Triune God rather than simply emptying the mind.
- Acknowledging "a sinner" is to lead firstly to a state of humbleness and repentance, recognizing one's own sinfulness.
- Practicing the Jesus Prayer is strongly linked to mastering passions of both soul and body, e.g. by fasting. For the Eastern Orthodox not the body is wicked, but "the bodily way of thinking" is; therefore salvation also regards the body.
- Unlike "seed syllables" in particular traditions of chanting mantras, the Jesus Prayer may be translated into whatever language the pray-er customarily uses. The emphasis is on the meaning, not on the mere utterance of certain sounds.
- There is no emphasis on the psychosomatic techniques, which are merely seen as helpers for uniting the mind with the heart, not as prerequisites.

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A magistral way of meeting God for the Orthodox, the Jesus Prayer does not harbor any secrets in itself, nor does its practice reveal any esoteric truths. Instead, as a hesychastic practice, it demands setting the mind apart from rational activities and ignoring the physical senses for the experiential knowledge of God. It stands along with the regular expected actions of the believer (prayer, almsgiving, repentance, fasting etc.) as the response of the Orthodox Tradition to St. Paul's challenge to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess 5:17). It is also linked to the Song of Solomon's passage from the Old Testament: "I sleep, but my heart is awake" (Song of Solomon 5:2). The analogy being that as a lover is always conscious to his or her beloved, people can also achieve a state of "constant prayer" where they are always conscious of God's presence in their lives.

Practice

"There isn't Christian Mysticism without Theology, especially there isn't Theology without Mysticism", writes Vladimir Lossky, for outside the Church the personal experience would have no certainty and objectivity, and "Church teachings would have no influence on souls without expressing a somehow inner experience of the truth it offers". For the Eastern Orthodox the aim isn't knowledge itself; theology is, finally, always a means serving a goal above any knowledge: theosis.

The individual experience of the Eastern Orthodox mystic most often remains unknown. With very few exceptions, there aren't autobiographical writings on the inner life in the East. The mystical union pathway remains hidden, being unveiled only to the confessor or to the apprentices. "The mystical individualism has remained unknown to the spiritual life of the Eastern Church", remarks Lossky.

The practice of the Jesus Prayer is integrated into the mental ascesis undertaken by the Orthodox monastic in the practice of hesychasm. Yet the Jesus Prayer is not limited only to monastic life or

to clergy. All members of the Christian Church are advised to practice this prayer, laypeople and clergy, men, women and children.

Eastern Orthodox prayer rope.

In the Eastern tradition the prayer is said or prayed repeatedly, often with the aid of a prayer rope (Russian: chotki; Greek: komvoskini), which is a cord, usually woolen, tied with many knots. The person saying the prayer says one repetition for each knot. It may be accompanied by prostrations and the sign of the cross, signaled by beads strung along the prayer rope at intervals. The prayer rope is "a tool of prayer". The use of the prayer rope, however, is not compulsory and it is considered as an aid to the beginners or the "weak" practitioners, those who face difficulties practicing the Prayer.

It should be noted here that the Jesus Prayer is ideally practiced under the guidance and supervision of a spiritual guide (pneumatikos, πνευματικός), and or Starets, especially when Psychosomatic techniques (like rhythmical breath) are incorporated. A person that acts as a spiritual "father" and advisor. Usually an official certified by the Church Confessor (Pneumatikos Exolmologitis) or sometimes a spiritually experienced monk (called in Greek Gerontas (Elder) or in Russian Starets). It is not impossible for that person to be a layperson, usually a "Practical Theologian" (i.e. a person well versed in Orthodox Theology but without official credentials, certificates, diplomas etc.) but this is not a common practice either or at least it is not commonly advertised as ideal.

Techniques

There are not fixed, invariable rules for those who pray, "the way there is no mechanical, physical or mental technique which can force God to show his presence" (Metropolitan Kallistos Ware).

People who say the prayer as part of meditation often synchronize it with their breathing; breathing in while calling out to God (Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God) and breathing out while praying for mercy (have mercy on me, a sinner). Another option is to say (orally or mentally) the whole prayer while breathing in and again the whole prayer while breathing out and yet another, to breathe in recite the whole prayer, breathe out while reciting the whole prayer again. One can also hold the breath for a few seconds between breathing in and out. It is advised, in any of these three last cases, that this be done under some kind of spiritual guidance and supervision.

Monks often pray this prayer many hundreds of times each night as part of their private cell vigil ("cell rule"). Under the guidance of an Elder (Russian Starets; Greek Gerondas), the monk aims to internalize the prayer, so that he is praying unceasingly. St. Diadochos of Photiki refers in *On Spiritual Knowledge and Discrimination* to the automatic repetition of the Jesus Prayer, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, even in sleep. This state is regarded as the accomplishment of Saint Paul's exhortation to the Thessalonians to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

The Jesus Prayer can also be used for a kind of "psychological" self-analysis. According to the "Way of the Pilgrim" account and Mount Athos practitioners of the Jesus Prayer, "one can have some insight on his or her current psychological situation by observing the intonation of the

words of the prayer, as they are recited. Which word is stressed most. This self-analysis could reveal to the praying person things about their inner state and feelings, maybe not yet realised, of their unconsciousness."

"While praying the Jesus Prayer, one might notice that sometimes the word 'Lord' is pronounced louder, more stressed, than the others, like: Lord Jesus Christ, (Son of God), have mercy on me, (a/the sinner). In this case, they say, it means that our inner self is currently more aware of the fact that Jesus is the Lord, maybe because we need reassurance that he is in control of everything (and our lives too). Other times, the stressed word is 'Jesus': Lord Jesus Christ, (Son of God), have mercy on me, (a/the sinner). In that case, they say, we feel the need to personally appeal more to his human nature, the one that is more likely to understand our human problems and shortcomings, maybe because we are going through tough personal situations. Likewise if the word 'Christ' is stressed it could be that we need to appeal to Jesus as Messiah and Mediator, between humans and God the Father, and so on. When the word 'Son' is stressed maybe we recognise more Jesus' relationship with the Father. If 'of God' is stressed then we could realise more Jesus' unity with the Father. A stressed 'have mercy on me' shows a specific, or urgent, need for mercy. A stressed 'a sinner' (or 'the sinner') could mean that there is a particular current realisation of the sinful human nature or a particular need for forgiveness.

"In order to do this kind of self-analysis one should better start reciting the prayer relaxed and naturally for a few minutes – so the observation won't be consciously 'forced', and then to start paying attention to the intonation as described above.

Also, a person might want to consciously stress one of the words of the prayer in particular when one wants to express a conscious feeling of situation. So in times of need stressing the 'have mercy' part can be more comforting or more appropriate. In times of failures, the 'a sinner' part, etc....)"

Levels of the prayer

Icon of The Ladder of Divine Ascent (the steps toward theosis as described by St. John Climacus) showing monks ascending (and falling from) the ladder to Jesus.

Paul Evdokimov, a 20th-century Russian philosopher and theologian, writes about beginner's way of praying: initially, the prayer is excited because the man is emotive and a flow of psychic contents is expressed. In his view this condition comes, for the modern men, from the separation of the mind from the heart: "The prattle spreads the soul, while the silence is drawing it together." Old fathers condemned elaborate phraseologies, for one word was enough for the publican, and one word saved the thief on the cross. They only uttered Jesus' name by which they were contemplating God. For Evdokimov the acting faith denies any formalism which quickly installs in the external prayer or in the life duties; he quotes St. Seraphim: "The prayer is not thorough if the man is self-conscious and he is aware he's praying."

"Because the prayer is a living reality, a deeply personal encounter with the living God, it is not to be confined to any given classification or rigid analysis" an on-line catechism reads. As general guidelines for the practitioner, different number of levels (3, 7 or 9) in the practice of the prayer are distinguished by Orthodox fathers. They are to be seen as being purely informative, because the practice of the Prayer of the Heart is learned under personal spiritual guidance in Eastern Orthodoxy which emphasizes the perils of temptations when it's done by one's own. Thus, Theophan the Recluse, a 19th-century Russian spiritual writer, talks about three stages:

- The oral prayer (the prayer of the lips) is a simple recitation, still external to the practitioner.
- The focused prayer, when "the mind is focused upon the words" of the prayer, "speaking them as if they were our own."
- The prayer of the heart itself, when the prayer is no longer something we do but who we are. Once this is achieved the Jesus Prayer is said to become "self-active" (αυτενεργούμενη). It is repeated automatically and unconsciously by the mind, having a Tetris Effect, like a (beneficial) Earworm. Body, through the uttering of the prayer, mind, through the mental repetition of the prayer, are thus unified with "the heart" (spirit) and the prayer becomes constant, ceaselessly "playing" in the background of the mind, like a background music, without hindering the normal everyday activities of the person.

Others, like Father Archimandrite Iliu Cleopa, one of the most representative spiritual fathers of contemporary Romanian Orthodox monastic spirituality, talk about nine levels. They are the same path to theosis, more slenderly differentiated:

- The prayer of the lips.
- The prayer of the mouth.
- The prayer of the tongue.
- The prayer of the voice.
- The prayer of the mind.
- The prayer of the heart.
- The active prayer.
- The all-seeing prayer.
- The contemplative prayer.

In its more advanced use, the monk aims to attain to a sober practice of the Jesus Prayer in the heart free of images. It is from this condition, called by Saints John Climacus and Hesychios the "guard of the mind", that the monk is raised by the Divine grace to contemplation.

Variants of repetitive formulas

A number of different repetitive prayer formulas have been attested in the history of Eastern Orthodox monasticism: the Prayer of St. Ioannikios the Great (754–846): "My hope is the Father, my refuge is the Son, my shelter is the Holy Ghost, O Holy Trinity, Glory unto You," the repetitive use of which is described in his Life; or the more recent practice of St. Nikolaj Velimirović.

Similarly to the flexibility of the practice of the Jesus Prayer, there is no imposed standardization of its form. The prayer can be from as short as "Lord, have mercy" (Kyrie eleison), "Have mercy on me" ("Have mercy upon us"), or even "Jesus", to its longer most common form. It can also contain a call to the Theotokos (Virgin Mary), or to the saints. The single essential and invariable element is Jesus' name.

- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. (a very common form)
(Sometimes "τον αματωλόν" is translated "a sinner" but in Greek the article "τον" is a

definite article, so it could be translated "the sinner.")

- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me. (a very common form in the Greek tradition)
- Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me. (common variant on Mount Athos)
- Jesus, have mercy.
- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.
- Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

In art

The Jesus Prayer is a core part of the plot in J. D. Salinger's pair of stories *Franny and Zooey*. Its use in that book is itself referenced in Jeffrey Eugenides's novel, *The Marriage Plot*. The prayer is also a central theme of the 2006 Russian film *Ostrov*.

Catholic Church

Part Four of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which is dedicated to Christian prayer, devotes paragraphs 2665 to 2669 to prayer to Jesus.

To pray "Jesus" is to invoke him and to call him within us. His name is the only one that contains the presence it signifies. Jesus is the Risen One, and whoever invokes the name of Jesus is welcoming the Son of God who loved him and who gave himself up for him. This simple invocation of faith developed in the tradition of prayer under many forms in East and West. The most usual formulation, transmitted by the spiritual writers of the Sinai, Syria, and Mt. Athos, is the invocation, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us sinners." It combines the Christological hymn of Philippians 2:6-11 with the cry of the publican and the blind men begging for light. By it the heart is opened to human wretchedness and the Savior's mercy. The invocation of the holy name of Jesus is the simplest way of praying always. When the holy name is repeated often by a humbly attentive heart, the prayer is not lost by heaping up empty phrases, but holds fast to the word and "brings forth fruit with patience." This prayer is possible "at all times" because it is not one occupation among others but the only occupation: that of loving God, which animates and transfigures every action in Christ Jesus.

In his poem *The Book of the Twelve Béguines*, John of Ruysbroeck, a 14th-century Flemish mystic beatified by Pope Pius X in 1908, wrote of "the uncreated Light, which is not God, but is the intermediary between Him and the 'seeing thought'" as illuminating the contemplative not in the highest mode of contemplation, but in the second of the four ascending modes.

Similar methods of prayer in use in the Roman Catholic Church are recitation, as recommended by Saint John Cassian, of "O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me" or other verses of Scripture; repetition of a single monosyllabic word, as suggested by the *Cloud of Unknowing*; the method used in *Centering Prayer*; the use of *Lectio Divina*; etc.

Use by other Christians

In addition to Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox, many Christians of other traditions also use the Jesus Prayer, primarily as a centering prayer or for contemplative prayer. The prayer is sometimes used with the Anglican Rosary. The structure and content of the Jesus Prayer also bears a resemblance to the "Sinner's Prayer" used by many Evangelical Protestants.

3.5. The Pharisee and the Tax-collector, explain the cultural and religious situation to which each refers, and explain what it teaches about prayer.

Jesus is warning against self-righteousness and pride in prayer. Such prayers are not answered, but God answers the prayer from a humble and repentant heart.

3.6.1 describe different kinds of prayer in indigenous Zambia

There is not one single way of praying. People belong to different religious sects and each of those has a style of praying.

3.6.2. Hindu:

Prayer or worship is considered to be an integral part of the Hindu religion. The chanting of mantras is the most popular form of worship in Hinduism. Yoga and meditation are also considered as a form of devotional service towards the Lord. The Picture to the right represents the Aum sign, which is a sound of peace.

The Vedas are a collection of liturgy (mantras, hymns)

The Hindu devotional Bhakti movements emphasizes repetitive prayer. Stemming from the universal Soul or Brahman, prayer is focused on the personal forms of God, such as Shiva, Vishnu, or Vishnu's Avatars, Rama and Krishna.

Before the process of ritual, before the invoking of different deities for the fulfillment of various needs, came the human aspiration to the highest truth, the foundational monism of Hinduism, pertaining ultimately to the one Brahman. Brahman, which summarily can be called the unknowable, true, infinite and blissful Divine Ground, is the source and being of all existence from which the cosmos springs. This is the essence of the Vedic system.

3.6.3. Muslim:

Salātor prayer is the practice of ritualistic prayer in Islam as opposed to dua, which is the Arabic word for supplication. Its importance for Muslims is indicated by its status as one of the Five Pillars of Islam.

Salat is preceded by ritual ablution and usually performed five times a day. It consists of the repetition of a unit called a rak'ah consisting of prescribed actions and words. The number of obligatory (fard) varies from two to four according to the time of day or other circumstances (such as Friday congregational worship, which has two rakats). Prayer is obligatory for all Muslims except those who are prepubescent, menstruating, or are experiencing bleeding in the 40 days after childbirth.

The chief purpose of salat is to act as a person's communication with and remembrance of God. By reciting "The Opening", the first sura (chapter) of the Quran, as required in daily worship, the worshiper can stand before God, thank and praise him, and ask for guidance along the "Straight Path".

In addition, daily worship reminds Muslims to give thanks for God's blessings and that submission to God takes precedence over all other concerns, thereby revolving their life around God and submitting to his will. Worship also serves as a formal method of dhikr or remembering Allah.

In the Quran, it is written that: "For, Believers are those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a tremor in their hearts, and when they hear His signs rehearsed, find their faith strengthened, and put (all) their trust in their Lord;"

"To those whose hearts, when God is mentioned, are filled with fear, who show patient perseverance over their afflictions, keep up regular prayer, and spend (in charity) out of what we have bestowed upon them."

Salat is also cited as a means of restraining a believer from social wrongs and moral deviancy.

According to a hadith in the collection Sahih Bukhari, Muhammad considered salat "the best deed"

People who find it physically difficult can perform Salat in a way suitable for them. To perform valid Salat, Muslims must be in a state of ritual purity, which is mainly achieved by ritual ablution, according to prescribed

3.6.4. Christian religious traditions:

Prayer is an important activity in Christianity, and there are several different forms of Christian prayer.

Christian prayers are diverse: they can be completely spontaneous, or read entirely from a text, like the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. The most common prayer among Christians is the "Lord's Prayer", which according to the gospel accounts (e.g. Matthew 6:9-13) is how Jesus taught his disciples to pray. "The Lord's Prayer" is a model for prayers of adoration, confession and petition in Christianity.

A broad, three stage characterization of prayer begins with vocal prayer, then moves on to a more structured form in terms of meditation, then reaches the multiple layers of contemplation, or intercession.

There are two basic settings for Christian prayer: corporate (or public) and private. Corporate prayer includes prayer shared within the worship setting or other public places. These prayers can be formal written prayers or informal extemporaneous prayers. Private prayer occurs with the individual praying either silently or aloud within a private setting. Prayer exists within multiple different worship contexts and may be structured differently. These types of contexts may include:

Liturgical: Often seen within the Catholic Church. This is a very orthodox service. Within a Catholic Mass, which is an example of a liturgical form of worship, there are bible readings and a sermon is read.

Non- Liturgical: Often seen within Evangelical church, this prayer is often not scripted and would be more informal in structure. Most of these prayers would be extemporaneous.

Charismatic: Often seen within gospel churches. It is the main form of worship in Pentecostal churches. It usually includes song and dance, and may include other artistic expressions. There may be no apparent structure, but the worshippers will be "led by the Holy Spirit".

3.6.5. There is no pattern of prayer one can really propose. What is important is to be within the Bible for any pattern of prayer one adopts or prefers.

Revision Questions

1. Describe prayer in Hinduism
2. Describe prayer in Islam
3. Describe prayer in Christian religious traditions
4. Illustrate from Luke's Gospel, Jesus' practice of private prayer. Luke 11: 1-13

UNIT IV

JESUS' ATTITUDE TO OTHER PEOPLE

(Mathew 18: 15-35; Luke 4: 25-27; 5: 12-13 & 27-32; 6: 27-38; Luke 7: 1-10 & 36-50; 9: 49-55; 10: 29-37; 11: 30-32; 12: 57-59; 13: 28-30; 15: 1-10; 16: 19-31; 17: 1-4; 19: 1-10; 22: 47-51; 23: 33-34).

4.1. Illustrate different attitudes towards other people, particularly towards unpopular or despised people, expressed in modern Zambia.

In general, Zambia cares for the unpopular or despised and in many instances these are incorporated in society even in government plans. Non-governmental organizations and Churches try their best too in integrating such people in society and help them overcome their problems. There are however, individuals who have no regard for the unpopular. This is not just a problem with individuals who are not Christians, a down attitude towards other people is practiced even by people who call themselves Christians. It is therefore imperative for the Church to continue teaching the attitude of Jesus towards the outcast and the unpopular.

In Zambia today, there are many despised categories of people, such as gays, homosexuals, thieves, to mention a few. Should the Church be inclusive of them? There are also other people such as the HIV patients, the poor, the uneducated ... who have been looked down upon by society. What is the biblical teaching towards such people?

POPE FRANCIS

MORNING MEDITATION IN THE CHAPEL OF THE □ DOMUS SANCTAE MARTHAE

Christ in the face of the outcast

Monday, 17 November 2014

A Christian is called to recognize the Lord in the outcast, without the airs of those — and there are so many even inside the Vatican — who feel “privileged” for being included in a “band of the chosen” and in that “ecclesiastical microclimate” which in reality distances the Church from the People of God and the various peripheries. The Pope said this on Monday morning during Mass at Santa Marta.

Francis referred to a passage from the Gospel of Luke (18:35-43), indicating that “this Gospel passage begins with an unseeing man, a blind man, and ends with him receiving his sight, and ‘all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God’”.

There are “three categories of people in this passage: the blind man; those who were with Jesus; and the people”, the Pope explained.

The blind man, the Pontiff continued, because of the “illness which took his sight, couldn’t see, he was begging”. And “perhaps he was often saddened” and wondered: “Why did this happen to

me?”. In other words, he was a man who “couldn’t find a way out, an outcast”. And thus “the blind man was sitting by the roadside” like “so many outcasts here” in the various streets and public squares of Rome. Today, the Pope recalled, there are “so many, so many, sitting by the roadside”.

That man couldn’t see but “he wasn’t foolish: he knew all that went on in the city”. After all, “he was right at the entrance to the city of Jericho” and thus, “he knew everything and he wanted to know everything”. Such that “he heard the noise and inquired: what’s happening?”. In any event, Francis noted, he was “a man who found a way of life along this road, a beggar, an outcast, a blind man”. However, “when he heard Jesus was coming, he cried out”. And when “they told him to be silent, he cried out even louder”. What was the reason for his behaviour? The Pope explained it this way: “This man wanted salvation, he wanted to be healed”. And thus, the Gospel reads: “Jesus said that he had faith”. Indeed, Francis explained, the blind man “gambled and won”, even though “it’s difficult to gamble when a person is so ‘debased’, so marginalized”. However, “he gambled” and he knocked “at the door of Jesus’ heart”.

The “second category of people” that we meet in the passage of the Gospel of Luke is instead comprised of “those who walked with the Lord: they were walking ahead, leading the way”. These were “the disciples, and the apostles too, those who followed Him and went with the Lord”. They were also “the converts, those who had accepted the Kingdom of God” and who “were happy about this salvation”.

This is exactly why “they rebuked the blind man to be silent”, telling him: “Calm down, be polite! It’s the Lord. Please, don’t make a scene!”. And in this way “they distanced the Lord” from the periphery. In fact, Francis stated, this peripheral man “was unable to reach the Lord, because this band — albeit with such good will — closed the door”.

Unfortunately, the Pontiff acknowledged, “this happens frequently among us believers: when we’ve found the Lord, without realizing, we create this ecclesiastical microclimate”. And this is an attitude not only of priests and bishops, but also the faithful. It’s a manner of conduct that leads us to say: “we are the ones who are with the Lord”. However, it often happens that in “looking at the Lord” we end up “not seeing the Lord’s needs: we don’t see the Lord who is hungry, who is thirsty, who is in prison, who is in the hospital”. Indeed, we fail to see the “Lord in the outcast” and this is “a very harmful climate”.

The problem, the Pope explained, is that “these people who were with Jesus had forgotten the harsh moments of their own marginalization; they had forgotten at the moment and in the place that Jesus called them”. Therefore they said: “Now we are chosen, we’re with the Lord”. And they were happy with this “little world” but they wouldn’t “allow people to disturb the Lord”, to the point that “they didn’t even allow children to approach, to draw near”. Francis remarked that they were people who “had forgotten the journey that the Lord had made with them, the journey of conversion, of calling, of healing”.

Recalling a passage from Revelation (1:1-5, 2:1-5), the Pontiff described this as a reality that “the Apostle John tells with a really beautiful phrase that we heard in the First Reading: they had forgotten, they had abandoned their first love”. And this “is a sign: in the Church, the faithful, the ministers, become a group like this, not ecclesial but ecclesiastical”, when a group is privileged “with closeness to the Lord, there is the temptation of forgetting their first love”. It is precisely “that beautiful love which we all had when the Lord called us, saved us, said to us: I

love you so much”. Even the disciples are tempted “to forget the first love, that is, to forget the peripheries, where I was before, even should I be ashamed of it”. This attitude can be expressed this way: “Lord, this one has an odour, don’t let him come to you”. But the Lord’s response is clear: “did you not have an odour when I kissed you?”.

In facing the temptation of the “bands of the chosen”, which are found in every age, the conduct of “Jesus in the Church, in the history of the Church”, is described in this way by Luke: “Jesus stopped”. This, the Pope underscored, is “a grace. When Jesus stops and says: look over there, bring him to me”, as he did with the blind man in Jericho. In this way the Lord “makes the disciples turn their heads to the suffering peripheries”, as if to say: “Do not look only at me. Yes, you must see me, but not only me! See me in others too, in the needy”.

Indeed, Francis indicated, “when God stops, He always does so with mercy and justice, but also, sometimes, he does so with anger”. This happens when the Lord “is stopped by the ruling class” which He defines as the “evil and adulterous generation”. Certainly, the Pope commented, “this was no caress”. Returning to the Gospel and the episode of of the blind man in Jericho, the Pontiff wished to highlight that Jesus himself wants the man brought near and heals him, recognizing his faith: “your faith has made you well”.

The third group presented by Luke is “the simple people who needed signs of salvation”. The Gospel passage reads: “all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God”. These people were, therefore, capable of “celebrating, of praising God, of losing time with the Lord”. The Pope also noted that “so often we find simple people, so many elderly women who walk, and sacrifice so much to go and pray at a shrine of Our Lady”. They are people who “don’t ask for privileges, they ask only for grace”. They are “the faithful people who know how to follow the Lord without asking for any privileges”.

See then, Francis summarized, the three categories of people who directly call upon us: “the outcast; the privileged, those who have been chosen and who are now subject to temptation; and the faithful people who follow the Lord to praise Him because He is good, and also to ask Him for health, to ask Him for so much grace”.

This reflection, the Pope suggested, should lead us to consider “the Church, our Church, which is sitting by this roadside in Jericho”. Because “in the Bible, according to the fathers, Jericho is the symbol of sin”. Thus, he urged, “let us consider the Church watching Jesus pass, this outcast Church”. Let us consider “these nonbelievers, those who have sinned so much and who don’t want to get up, because they don’t have the strength to start over”. And, the Pontiff added, let us also consider the “Church of the children, of the sick, of the imprisoned, the Church of the simple people”, asking the Lord “that all of us, that we have the grace of having been called” and that we “never, never, ever distance ourselves from this Church. Let us never enter into this microclimate of privileged ecclesiastical disciples who distance themselves from the Church of God, that is suffering, that is asking for salvation, that is asking for faith, that is asking for the Word of God”. Lastly, the Pope concluded, “let us ask for the grace to be faithful People of God, without asking the Lord for any privilege that may distance us from the People of God”.

This article is part of the original blog by Rev. Dr. Mark D. Roberts
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Jesus was both scandalously inclusive and curiously exclusive. He included in his fellowship those who were often excluded from religious fellowship (tax collectors, “sinners,” lepers, women, children). Yet he excluded notable religious leaders and others who were unable to receive the kingdom of God with the humility and openness of a child. However while Jesus extended the grace of the kingdom to many who were wounded or sinful, he didn’t include them in their brokenness, but rather restored them to wholeness as they entered his community

Because the notion of inclusiveness is central to the current crisis in the church, it deserves careful analysis. In particular we need to ask: a careful look at inclusiveness is required

Is it true that Jesus was inclusive? And if so, in what sense was Jesus inclusive? Were there limits to Jesus’ inclusiveness? How does the teaching of Jesus help us to understand his inclusive practice? Was the religion of Jesus “a religion of inclusion and wisdom,”

What does it mean for the church to be inclusive? What doesn’t it mean?

Is inclusiveness “the real meaning of Christianity,” □

The Inclusiveness of Jesus (Tax collectors and sinners) □ Jesus began his ministry in a religious and cultural environment where exclusion was common. Many of his Jewish contemporaries understood their status as God’s chosen people to be evidence of God’s care for them, but not the gentiles. Overlooking texts from the Hebrew Bible that envisioned the ultimate inclusion of the gentiles in God’s kingdom (for example, Genesis 12:1-3; Psalm 22:27-28; Isaiah 49:1-6; 56:3-8), first-century Jews emphasized the exclusion of gentiles from God’s glorious future. Of course the fact that gentile Romans dominated the Jewish people didn’t help them to prize the Old Testament promises of an inclusive kingdom.

But even among Jews, exclusion of others was often associated with true piety. The Pharisees, a popular Jewish renewal movement in the time of Jesus, accepted into their fellowship only men who adopted priestly purity laws in daily life. The Pharisees looked down upon the majority of the Jews as “the people of the land,” the unspiritual masses. The Essenes, who gathered in Qumran near the Dead Sea, took exclusion to a level far beyond the Pharisaic standard. Entrance into the Essene community required, not only that one be a male who practiced priestly purity, but virtual separation from all who were not part of their monastic community. Not only were outsiders unwelcome in the Essene fellowship, but also they had nothing to look forward to from the Lord other than fiery judgment.

When contrasted to the exclusionary practices of the Pharisees and the Essenes, Jesus’ openness to common people – even those who were ritually unclean or regarded as sinners – stands out starkly. Consider a story from early in the Gospel of Mark.

And as he sat at dinner in Levi’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting with

Jesus and his disciples—for there were many who followed him. When the scribes of the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” When Jesus heard this, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.” (Mark 2:15-17, NRSV)

We’re told that “many tax collectors and sinners” were sitting with Jesus, and that many of this kind of people followed him. These were exactly the sort whom the Pharisees and Essenes readily excluded from their company. In fact, even ordinary Jews would have little desire to be sullied through fellowship with “tax collectors and sinners.” Tax collectors, after all, were Jewish turncoats who made their money through collusion with the Roman imperialists. Sinners were people whose lives were so obviously and publicly contrary to God’s law that one should avoid all unnecessary contact with them. Yet, here was Jesus, allowing the rabble to follow him, and even to eat with him. Remember that the act of sharing a meal was, in the culture of Jesus, a powerful statement of acceptance and inclusion.

To make matters worse, Jesus was enjoying table fellowship with moral, religious, and cultural outsiders in the home of Levi, the tax collector. And, even more scandalously, Jesus had just recently invited Levi to follow him as one of Jesus’ closest disciples. This sort of inclusiveness was both unprecedented and unacceptable in the time of Jesus.

Why did he mix it up with such outcasts, and even include them among his followers? This is the question that some of the leaders of the Pharisees asked. Jesus answered: “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners” (Mark 2:17). Using the categories of the Pharisees themselves (righteous, sinners), Jesus made it clear that his mission involved reaching out to and drawing to God those whom the Pharisees ignored, excluded, and even despised.

So, those who claim that Jesus was exceptionally inclusive are surely onto something important. But in order to evaluate their attempt to imitate Jesus, we need to examine other examples of his inclusiveness, and then to grapple with his reasons for such unexpected and unorthodox behavior.

□The Inclusiveness of Jesus (Lepers)□In my last post I began examining the inclusiveness of Jesus. We have already seen how Jesus hung out with social and religious outcasts, such as tax-collectors and sinners. Thus Jesus included among his followers those who would have been excluded by contemporaneous Jewish movements, such as the Pharisees or the Essenes.

In the opening chapter of the Gospel of Mark, Jesus began his ministry by calling the first of his disciples. As I explain in my book, *Jesus Revealed*, the very fact that Jesus chose his own followers, rather than letting them come to him, set him apart from the common practice of rabbinic teachers in his day. It’s also striking that Jesus reached out, neither to religious elite, nor to the wealthy, nor to people of power, but to common fishermen. The sorts of qualities that often impress us didn’t impress Jesus. And the kinds of people we might choose as the core leaders of a new movement weren’t the kinds of people chosen by Jesus.

With his small band of followers, Jesus began his public ministry in the synagogues (Jewish

gathering places) of Galilee (the region in which he was raised). There he taught with unexpected authority, backing up his teaching with works of exceptional power (healings, exorcisms). The people were amazed by the authority of Jesus as a teacher and a healer.

One day Jesus was approached by a man suffering with what we usually call leprosy. (In fact the original language could refer to a variety of debilitating and highly contagious skin diseases.) Here's the way Mark tells the story:

- A leper came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, "If you choose, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "I do choose. Be made clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, saying to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter (Mark 1:40-45).

A little background will help us see what's really going on in this story. Lepers were cursed, not only with a terrible illness, but also with exclusion from society. On the one hand, people wanted to keep far away from those with a contagious disease. On the other hand, because of their illness, lepers were ceremonially unclean, and therefore excluded from communal religious activity. They lived in the outskirts of civilization and, if they came close to people, had to warn them by yelling, "Unclean! Unclean!" Talk about social ostracism!

The leper who approached Jesus broke social and religious convention. He was taking a huge risk in presenting himself to Jesus, especially because Jesus would have been known as a holy man, not the sort to mix it up with ceremonially unclean lepers.

But then Jesus himself broke social and religious convention, not only by healing the leper, but by touching him. According to the law, by touching an unclean person Jesus was making himself unclean – exactly the opposite of what one would expect from a holy man. Thus, though Jesus' healing of the leper was wonderful, his act of touching this man stands out as a powerful symbol of compassion. Moreover, since we know from other stories that Jesus could heal from a distance, it's clear that Jesus' act of touching wasn't necessary for the leper's physical healing. He touched the leper, not to heal his body, but to heal his soul, and to indicate the beginning of the man's inclusion within human society.

Jesus told the healed leper to show himself to the priest. Why? Because only the priest had the authority within Jewish society to determine that the former leper was now clean (Leviticus 13). Thus this man would be welcome once again in both social and religious activities. He would be restored to the community from which he had been excluded. Jesus' concern, therefore, was not only for the leper's physical healing, but also for his inclusion once more within human community.

From this story it would be tempting to conclude that the inclusiveness of Jesus extended to all people, since he reached out even to a leper, one of the most excluded people in history. But this would be an imprecise conclusion. As far as we know, Jesus did not include lepers among his

followers or urge that they be accepted in the villages of Galilee. Rather, he healed lepers, so that they might be fully whole, experiencing a wholeness that entailed restoration to human fellowship. To say that the community of Jesus included lepers would be to overlook one of the most salient facts of this story: after Jesus finished with him, the leper wasn't a leper anymore. Jesus didn't include lepers, but former lepers.

It is correct to say that Jesus reached out to a leper in love, and did so even with a costly personal sacrifice (of ritual cleanliness). He did not exclude lepers from his caring, therapeutic ministry. This is certainly true. But it would be incorrect to say that in this story Jesus included a leper. Rather, he healed a leper, and then provided a way for this restored human being -- no longer a leper -- to be included once again in Jewish society. The inclusiveness of Jesus wasn't of the "Come as you are and stay as you are" variety. Instead, it was more like "Come as you are, be healed and transformed, and then stay as a whole person."

In my next post I'll examine other passages where Jesus includes people typically excluded from religious activity.

□The Inclusiveness of Jesus (Women)□So far in this series we've seen how Jesus included social outcasts in his fellowship, even reaching out to touch and to heal an unclean leper, so that this man might be restored to human community. Yet Jesus also sought to embrace within his ministry a large group of people who, though not outcasts from society, were regularly excluded from organized religious life. I'm speaking here of women.

In an earlier post I mentioned that the Pharisees and the Essenes, two Jewish movements contemporaneous with Jesus, accepted only men into their membership. Women were also excluded from the Jewish priesthood, as well as from the important role of scribe. Some ancient rabbis even refused to teach women. One said, "Rather should the words of the Torah be burned than entrusted to a woman . . . Whoever teaches his daughter the Torah is like one who teaches her obscenity" (Mishnah, Sotah, 3.4). Another rabbi discouraged men from even speaking with women, "Who speaks much with a woman draws down misfortune on himself, neglects the words of the law, and finally earns hell" (Mishnah, Aboth, 1.5).

Jesus, on the contrary, regularly interacted with women, allowing himself to have fellowship even with a woman of ill repute (Luke 7:36-50). Not only did Jesus speak with women, but he also taught them. When one of his followers named Mary sat at his feet to learn rather than attending to "women's work," much to the consternation of her busy sister, Martha, Jesus commended Mary for choosing "the better part" (Luke 10:38-42).

Although the New Testament gospels relate that Jesus had an inner core of twelve male disciples, they also bear witness to the presence of women among Jesus' closest followers. Consider this telling passage from Luke 8:

Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources. (8:1-3, NRSV)

Luke reports that “some women who had been cured” accompanied Jesus, along with “many others” who provided financial support for him and the twelve. So, as Jesus traveled around Galilee preaching and healing, those with him included both the twelve male disciples and a substantial group of women as well.

Luke 8 adds a fascinating detail that many of the women with Jesus “had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities.” One of these, Mary Magdalene, had actually been delivered of seven demons. Once again we learn that Jesus reached out to people who were social outcasts, as would be the case with sick or demonized women. Yet he didn’t simply include them among his retinue in the state in which he found them. Rather, he first healed them or delivered them from demonic bondage. Then, as free and whole people, they were included in the fellowship of Jesus’ followers.

In another passage of the gospels some Jewish leaders brought to Jesus a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery (John 8:1-11). They reminded Jesus that, according to the Law, this woman should be stoned to death (see Leviticus 20:10; conveniently, the leaders seem to have forgotten that the Law called for the same penalty for the male partner in the adulterous relationship) Jesus responded to them, at first by drawing in the sand, and then by saying, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her” (8:7). In time the accusers left, finally leaving the woman alone with Jesus. Noting that no one remained to condemn this woman, Jesus added, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again” (8:11).

In this instance the woman did not join the entourage of Jesus, so it would be inaccurate to say he included her within his actual community. But, undeniably, Jesus included this woman within his compassion and forgiveness. Or, to put it differently, Jesus saw this adulterous woman as included within the grace of the kingdom of God.

We must notice, however, that this case is similar to that of the leper in Mark 2. In that situation Jesus did not merely accept the leper as is, but healed him, returning him to his village as a whole man. In John 8 Jesus extended forgiveness to the adulterous woman, but he didn’t bless her in her adultery and release her to return to her lover. Rather, as he forgave her, Jesus also told her not to commit adultery anymore. He accepted this woman as a child of God worthy of forgiveness, but did not accept her sinful activity. Rather, the grace of God offered through Jesus was meant to lead the woman into a new life of holiness.

Therefore, although Jesus surely included the adulterous woman within the scope of God’s merciful reign, he didn’t thereby imply that it was just fine for her to keep on committing adultery. In fact the opposite was true. This is important for us to note because sometimes advocates of “inclusiveness” seem to interpret this as implying the acceptance of behaviors contrary to God’s revealed will. I can almost hear someone accusing Jesus of “excluding” this woman because he told her to stop committing adultery, rather than embracing her as she was. As we proceed in this study, we may need to sort out the difference between reaching out in love to all people, no matter what their state or condition, and including people in the community of Christ if they wish to persist in sin. Inclusiveness, however important it may be and however dramatically Jesus practiced it, cannot be separated from the promise of wholeness and the priority of holiness.

Without a doubt, however, Jesus included people within his ministry and community who were generally excluded from polite religious society in his day. Yet there are also passages in the gospels that seem to emphasize the exclusiveness of Jesus. To these I'll turn in my next post in this series. □

The Exclusiveness of Jesus (Section A) □

A brief synopsis:

Jesus included among his followers those who were generally excluded from other religious movements, people like “tax collectors and sinners.” He even shared meals with such outcasts – and astounding gesture of intimacy and acceptance. The inclusiveness of Jesus is striking indeed.

Jesus reached out to some of the most excluded of all people in his society: lepers. In one case he not only healed a man of leprosy, but showed concern for his full inclusion in Jewish society. Jesus reached out in love to a leper, a truly amazing action. Yet he didn't include a leper so much as a former leper. Jesus offered, not just inclusion, but healing and wholeness on the way to inclusion.

Unlike almost all of the Jewish leaders in his day, Jesus included women among his followers to a striking degree. Moreover, he reached out in love to a woman caught in egregious sin. Yet he didn't “include” her so much as forgive her and call her to repent of her sin. Though it would be correct to say that Jesus reached out to sinners, he didn't include them in the kingdom of God as sinners. Rather, he offered forgiveness and new life.

To wrap up where we've been so far, it's true that the inclusiveness of Jesus was extraordinary. Unlike his religious contemporaries, Jesus included among his followers those who were generally excluded from religious life, if not polite society, people such as tax-collectors, “sinners,” lepers, and women. Yet, the inclusiveness of Jesus was not of the “come as you are” sort. Jesus offered new, transformed life in the kingdom of God, not acceptance of all people as they were in their broken, sinful state.

However, in other ways Jesus was also exclusive, or so it seems.

Not everyone in the time of Jesus was interested in the life he offered so generously. In particular, many among the religious elite opposed Jesus, ultimately silencing him by turning him over to the Romans for crucifixion. Prior to his death, Jesus wasn't exactly trying to make peace with the Jewish religious leaders, however. Consider the following passage from the Gospel of Matthew:

- “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.” (Matt 23:13-15).

Notice that, according to Jesus, the scribes and Pharisees keep people out of the kingdom even as

the fail to enter themselves. One would be hard pressed to say that that inclusiveness of Jesus extended to the majority of the religious leaders among the Jews. He seems rather to exclude them from the kingdom of God (or to note that they exclude themselves).

Yet Jesus did not cut off relationship with all of these leaders. In fact on more than one occasion he ate in the home of a Pharisee (Luke 7:36; 14:1). The Gospel of John records a conversation between Jesus and a leading Pharisee named Nicodemus. In this context Jesus explained that in order to see the kingdom of God, one must be “born from above” (John 3:3; or as the Greek is traditionally rendered, “born again”). In other words, Nicodemus the Pharisee could be included in God’s kingdom, but only if he was reborn by the power of God, only if he believed in Jesus, the only Son of God (3:16). By implication, if Nicodemus rejected Jesus as God’s Son, then he would not be included in the eternal life of the kingdom.

The New Testament gospels also picture Jesus as being less than inclusive of gentiles. Though he did respect the faith of a Roman centurion to such an extent that he healed the man’s son (Matthew 8:5-13), on another occasion he seemed at first reticent to exorcise the daughter of a gentile woman (Mark 7:24-30). Only her wisdom and persistence ultimately persuaded Jesus to deliver her daughter from a demon (7:28-29). On another occasion, Jesus sent out his twelve closest disciples to spread the good news of the kingdom, though instructing them not to go among the gentiles (Matthew 10:5).

Why was Jesus so focused upon ministry among the Jews that he was resistant to including the gentiles? Answer: because he was so focused upon ministry among the Jews. Jesus had his priorities right, and he operated consistently in light of them. Jesus understood that his chief calling during his earthly ministry had to do with the Jewish people. In time, of course, he would instruct his followers to carry his good news throughout the world (Matthew 28:18-20). But this comes later.

Once more, we see that the inclusiveness of Jesus was neither simplistic nor generic. Rather, it was shaped by a clear vision of the kingdom of God and the priorities of his messianic ministry. We’ll see this even more clearly in my next post, which will continue the discussion of the exclusiveness of Jesus.

□The Exclusiveness of Jesus (Section B)□

Without a doubt, the inclusiveness of Jesus was exceptional. But, as we have seen so far in this series, it wasn’t “absolute” in the sense that Jesus invited all people to join him without qualification or condition. Jesus offered, not just inclusion in God’s kingdom, but healing, wholeness, and transformation. He reached out widely to sinners, but didn’t simply accept them as they were. Rather, he invited them to be forgiven and to turn around their lives as they responded to the good news of the kingdom of God.

Furthermore, as I discussed in my last post, at times Jesus seemed to be more exclusive than inclusive. He criticized many of the religious elite in his society, suggesting that they would fail to enter the kingdom. Moreover, he was hesitant to reach out to gentiles prior to the resurrection.

On one occasion, Jesus called a man to follow him, but the man asked for permission to go and

bury his father first – seemingly an innocent request. Yet Jesus responded negatively, saying, “Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:60). When another potential disciple asked to say farewell to his relatives before following him, Jesus answered, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62). In both of these episodes Jesus rejected apparently understandable requests to delay following him. The kingdom of God was for those who urgently sought it, Jesus revealed, making it a top priority for their lives. Once again, this is far from a “come as you are and stay as your were” kind of inclusiveness. In fact, entrance to the kingdom of God is not for everyone. At one point Jesus said, “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13).

The inclusiveness of Jesus can be quite elusive, it seems. At one moment he was generously inclusive, upsetting cultural and religious norms. At another, he appeared to raise the bar for entrance into the kingdom of God, excluding rather than including potential disciples. The paradox of Jesus’ inclusiveness is highlighted in a passage from Mark 10 that comprises two short episodes (Mark 10:13-22). In the first, people were bringing small children to Jesus so that he might bless them, but his disciples were blocking them. Presumably, they thought Jesus was too busy to mess around with kids. But Jesus rebuked his disciples, saying, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it” (Mark 10:14-15). So, on the one hand, Jesus included in the kingdom those whom others would have excluded (children, women, sinners, etc.). Yet, on the other hand, he excluded those who did not receive the kingdom in a childlike manner, by openly and trustingly giving themselves to God’s reign over their lives.

Mark follows this story of Jesus and the children with an account of his interaction with a wealthy man. This man asked Jesus how he might “inherit eternal life” (Mark 10:17). Jesus responded by reminding him of six of the Ten Commandments, which the man claimed to have kept since his youth. Mark concludes the story in this way:

- Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, “You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions. (Mark 10:21-22)

Rather than simply including the rich man within the promise of eternal life, Jesus told him to give away that which he loved more than the kingdom of God, namely, his riches. This certainly looks more exclusive than inclusive, doesn’t it? Even more striking, Mark adds that Jesus did this in love for the man. Simply accepting him as he was, with his heart sold out to riches rather than the kingdom, was not a loving action. How different is this perspective from the one so popular in our day! Excluding anybody from anything for any reason is said by many well-meaning Christians to be unloving. Yet Jesus knew that there are more important things than being included, things like having a pure heart and putting the kingdom of God first in your life. In fact, if we make Jesus our model for life, then we must admit that it is unloving to accept people as they are with their sinful hearts, without calling them to repent. Unconditional inclusiveness is both unloving and contrary to the example of Jesus.

After the rich man went away sorrowfully, Jesus commented to his disciples, “How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:23). When his disciples were troubled by these words, Jesus explained that though it is impossible for anyone to enter the kingdom by human initiative, “for God all things are possible” (Mark 10:27). In context, this means that the rich man could indeed have entered the kingdom, if he had allowed God to transform his greedy heart. God alone could have given this rich man a childlike heart so that he might be included within the kingdom of God.

I want to end the post with a couple of reflections. First, texts like this should make most of us in North America uncomfortable, because we are so much like the rich man in this story. We too have many possessions. And these often keep us from living fully under God’s reign. Before we rush to find a way to rationalize our materialistic lives, perhaps we should let the words and actions of Jesus in Mark 10 unsettle us a bit (or even more than a bit.)

Second, I got into this whole issue of Christian inclusiveness because of comments made about Jesus’ inclusiveness by Episcopalian leaders who are fighting to take church property away from the congregations that bought it and currently uses it. To put it more bluntly, they’re fighting for their “many possessions.” I don’t mean to put things too simply, because I know there are multiple issues at stake in this Episcopalian crisis. But it should at least give pause to those involved to realize how easily the power of possessions – even church properties – can keep them from living in the kingdom of God. Yet the good news is that God can set us free from our love of things so that we might live truly and freely under his gracious reign.

□The Exclusiveness of Jesus (Section C)□

In my last two posts I examined ways in which Jesus was more exclusive than inclusive in his ministry. Not only did he see the religious elite as excluding themselves from the kingdom of God, but also he did not include those who were unwilling to put the kingdom first in their lives. According to Jesus, only God could change the hearts of those who resisted the kingdom so that they might enter it as receptive children.

A curious combination of inclusiveness and exclusiveness can be found in several sayings of Jesus about himself and his relationship to God. In Matthew 11, for example, he said,

- “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things [about the kingdom of God] from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (11:25-27).

In this passage Jesus claimed to have a unique knowledge of God the Father, something he alone could reveal to others. Those who claim to know God apart from Jesus, therefore, are mistaken. Not exactly inclusive of other religious people, is it?

Yet, after claiming that he alone knew God truly, Jesus extended a generous invitation to all:

- “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

On the one hand, what could be more inclusive than this? Jesus invites all who are weary to enjoy his rest, echoing the offer of divine Wisdom in the Jewish wisdom tradition (see, for example, Sirach 6:26-30; 24:19-21). No one is excluded from this invitation. But, on the other hand, Jesus offers rest to those who take his yoke and learn from him. By implication, those who do not accept his instruction will not receive rest for their souls. In the same invitation, therefore, Jesus is both inclusive and exclusive. Rest is offered to all, but only if they receive it through Jesus.

In a similar vein, John 14 records Jesus as encouraging people to believe in God and also in him (14:1). In fact, he claimed to be “the way, and the truth, and the life” (14:6). According to Jesus, there aren’t “many roads up the mountain,” because “No one comes to the Father except through me” (14:6). Here is the exclusiveness of Jesus in its most blunt and extreme form. The kingdom of God is available both in this life and in the life to come, but only through Jesus himself. Jesus is not just the gatekeeper; he is the gate through whom one must pass to be saved (John 10:9).

Now this would sound terrible narrow and unfriendly, not to mention exclusive, except for the fact that Jesus wants to open the gate to all people. In the end of Gospel of Matthew, the risen Jesus gave the following instructions to his disciples: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20). So the community of Jesus isn’t to be some exclusive club, like the Jewish monastery at Qumran or the Pharisaic holy huddles. All persons are welcome and should receive Jesus’ invitation to join the kingdom.

Yet Jesus did not send out the disciples with the good news that all people are included in the kingdom of God regardless of their response to Jesus. They weren’t to go about preaching, “God loves you just as you are. Whatever you happen to believe is just fine.” Instead, they were to call people to believe in Jesus and to turn their lives around in response to him. Once again, inclusiveness and exclusiveness come together in Jesus. Through him, the kingdom of God is open to all, yet on his terms. Apart from Jesus, one cannot enter the kingdom.

The exclusive claims of Jesus don’t go over too well in our syncretistic and relativistic culture. (Actually, they didn’t go over too well in the syncretistic and relativistic first-century Roman world either!) Because the exclusiveness of Jesus doesn’t fit our cultural assumptions, many Christians have downplayed or even rejected the exclusiveness of real Jesus, preferring to refashion his extraordinary inclusiveness to fit our cultural milieu.

This appears to be the case with many leaders in the Episcopal church, and it has contributed to the crisis in the Los Angeles diocese (and elsewhere). Bishop Jon Bruno, when asked to sign a statement affirming Jesus as the only way to salvation, refused, claiming that he could not speak for God when it came to Jews, Muslims, and others. “I’m not willing to say that all other people, whether they are Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims or Jews, will be rejected by God,” the bishop said “Christianity is an optimum way of life.” Yet Bishop Bruno is unwilling to say that Jesus himself

is the life, and that outside of Jesus one cannot experience true life, both now and in the world to come. The reason for the bishop's hesitation? His sense of Jesus's inclusiveness: "Jesus loved us unconditionally. He had an unconditional love of humanity, allowing for no outcast in this community as he built the true religion, a religion of inclusion and wisdom." Yet whereas the love Jesus had for the world led him to invite others to accept him and his message, Bishop Bruno's vision involves including others regardless of their response to Jesus. Curiously enough, the bishop cites the inclusiveness of Jesus as the rationale for his un-Jesus-like vision of inclusion. □

Bishop Bruno would be well served to refresh his knowledge of the inclusiveness of Jesus as revealed in the Gospels, unless, of course, his detractors are correct, and he has abandoned biblical authority. Yet if he truly seeks to model himself after Jesus, as he claims, then he may want to tighten up his understanding of inclusiveness in light of the gospel truth, rather than his culturally-molded perceptions of that truth.

In my next post in this series I'll examine how the early church understood and applied the distinctive inclusiveness of Jesus in both theology and practice.

□The Inclusiveness of the Early Church (Section A)□

As we have seen so far in this series, Jesus was both scandalously inclusive and curiously exclusive. He included in his fellowship those who were often excluded from religious fellowship (tax collectors, "sinners," lepers, women, children). Yet he excluded notable religious leaders and others who were unable to receive the kingdom of God with the humility and openness of a child. Moreover, though Jesus extended the grace of the kingdom to many who were wounded or sinful, he didn't include them in their brokenness, but rather restored them to wholeness as they entered his community.

After his resurrection, Jesus continued his scandalously inclusive ways by revealing himself first to women (Matthew 28:9-10), who weren't even entitled to bear witness in a court of law. Jesus, however, enlisted Mary Magdalene as the first person to proclaim the good news of his resurrection (John 20:17-18). Surely this was not some accident, but rather an intentional action with powerful symbolism. The inclusiveness of Jesus' earthly ministry was to continue in the new community of his disciples.

Jesus' final words to his disciples in Matthew confirmed this perspective, as he told his closest followers to go and make disciples from all nations (Matthew 28:19). Whatever reticence Jesus showed about ministry to gentiles prior to his resurrection was overshadowed by his new passion to invite the whole world into God's kingdom. To this end, he promised that the Holy Spirit would come upon his disciples, empowering them to be his witnesses not only in the homeland of Jerusalem and Judea, but also in the region of the despised outcasts (Samaria), and even "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Talk about broad inclusiveness! Yet, as I mentioned in my last post, Jesus intended to include all people among his disciples, but only if they made an exclusive commitment to him as Lord and Savior.

Seven weeks after Jesus was crucified, and only days after he ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples, just as Jesus had promised. In Acts 2 the followers of

Jesus were supernaturally empowered to speak in many different languages so they could proclaim God's mighty deeds to the Jewish pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks (pentecoste in Greek, from which we get Pentecost). The fact that the disciples spoke in various languages dramatized what Jesus himself had said, namely, that his disciples would be his witnesses to the whole world.

When cynical observers accused the disciples of being drunk, Peter arose to set them straight. "They're not drunk," he explained, adding ironically, "for it is only nine o'clock in the morning" (Acts 1:15). Then he went on to explain the outpouring of the Spirit as the fulfillment of a prophecy from the Hebrew prophet Joel. This prophecy stated, in part:

"In the last days it will be, God declares, □ that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, □ and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, □ and your young men shall see visions, □ and your old men shall dream dreams. □ Even upon my slaves, both men and women, □ in those days I will pour out my Spirit; □ and they shall prophesy." (Acts 2:17-18)

Who gets included in the outpouring of the Spirit? Everybody, so to speak, both men and women, both young and old, no matter one's social or economic condition. Not only would such people be included in the new community of Jesus, but they would also be empowered by God for ministry, even the crucial ministry of prophecy (see 1 Corinthians 14). No longer would leadership be limited to men, or to those who were priests by heredity, or to those who adopted the extra burden of the oral law, or to those who could purchase influence through their wealth. In the church, all who acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Savior will receive the power of the indwelling Spirit (Acts 2:39; Romans 8:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

In his letter to the Galatians, written about twenty years after the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, the Apostle Paul addresses this inclusive reality from a theological perspective. Whereas God made the old covenant of law with the Jews, the new covenant of faith is open to all:

- for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:26-28)

All are "one" not in the sense that all are exactly the same, of course. Rather, all are now included in the community of Christ if they put their faith in him.

Now I'll admit that this can sound like highfalutin theology, especially if you're not accustomed to reading the letters of Paul. But Paul's point is really quite simple. The kinds of divisions between people that characterize human society are not to be found in the church of Jesus Christ. Neither race, nor ethnicity, nor economic status, nor gender, nor any other human distinction should exclude people from the church. All are invited to put their faith in Christ; and when they do, they receive the Spirit and are transplanted by the Spirit into the body of Christ, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13).

For Paul and the early Christians, this was not merely some bit of obscure theology. It was a

defining mark of their real life in community. Moreover, it set the Christian church apart from virtually every other religion, philosophy, and social group within the Roman world.

Yet inclusiveness in Christ is easier said than done, and the early Christians struggled mightily with the real life implications of their commitment to inclusiveness and unity. In my next post in this series I'll examine some of the problems faced by the early church, and how they dealt with these problems. In this way we'll see more clearly exactly what inclusiveness means, and what it doesn't mean.

□The Inclusiveness of the Early Church (Section B)□

In my last post in this series I began examining how the distinctive inclusiveness of Jesus was played out in the community of his first followers. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples, who spoke in various languages as a sign of the Spirit's being given to all people. Yet, even as all were to receive the Spirit and to be included in the community of Jesus, their way in was through faith in Jesus as Messiah and Savior. Those who put their trust in Christ entered a community in which the divisions of ethnicity, race, economic status, social status, and gender were broken down.

Yet I concluded my last post by noting that inclusiveness in Christ is easier said than done. For an example of this fact we need look no farther than the letter we know as 1 Corinthians. (In fact it was Paul's second letter to the church in Corinth, but I'll save discussion that for another day. [see 1 Cor 5:9]). Although the issues that led Paul to write 1 Corinthians were many, it would be safe to say that inclusiveness (or non-inclusiveness) was one of his prime considerations.

The Corinthian church was being split apart by several factions, with some Christians excluding others for a variety of reasons (1 Cor 1). Socio-economic factors came into play, with rich Christians looking down upon poorer Christians and acting as if they had no place within the community. The wealthy, who tended to be well-educated, scorned the theological simplicity of the poor. Moreover, certain members of the church were experiencing exciting spiritual manifestations. Yet rather than employing these for the growth and unity of the church, they were saying that others who lacked these manifestations were unnecessary to the church (1 Cor 12).

Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, in part, to call the church to unity. Those who overvalued their own importance, even to the point of excluding others, needed to rethink who they were in light of the gospel. The majority of the Corinthians needed to remember that, before they believed in Christ, they were relative nothings within Corinthian society (1 Cor 1:26). Yet God chose them to prove that his ways are not human ways. He chose the weak to shame the strong (1 Cor 1:27-29). Notice: the Corinthian church included many people who lacked social status, wealth, or higher education. Like Jesus, the church was exceptionally inclusive. And so it should have been, Paul argued. Those who would exclude other believers because they lacked learning or spiritual experience or wealth or status were missing the point.

The basis for the inclusion of many different types of people in the church was, as we have already seen in this series, the work of the Holy Spirit. As Paul put it in 1 Corinthians 12:12-13:

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Yet the inclusiveness of the Spirit was not absolute, as if anyone was to be included within the church no matter what. For one thing, entrance into the Christian community was a result of a person's confessing Jesus and Lord and being immersed into the body by the Spirit (1 Cor 12:1-13). Moreover, continued inclusion was contingent upon living in a way that was consistent with God's standards for Christian disciples.

In my next post I'll examine Paul's counsel to the Corinthians when they were confronting a situation when a church member was, as we say, "living in sin."

□The Inclusiveness of the Early Church (Section C)□

In my last post I began looking at how Christian inclusiveness (or exclusiveness) was played out in the church in Corinth (in southern Greece) in the middle of the first century A.D. God had included within the Corinthian church those who were on the outs of society. Moreover, the Apostle Paul rebuked those who excluded others from the church because they lacked certain spiritual experiences, explaining that the Spirit includes within the church all who profess faith in Jesus Christ.

Yet, in the same letter where Paul showed such concern for Christian inclusiveness, he also counseled the Corinthian Christians to exclude a member of their community. In 1 Corinthians 5:1-8 Paul dealt with a scandalous problem in the Corinthian congregation: a man was having sexual relations with his step-mother (5:1). Many of the Corinthians thought this was a fine idea, boasting that they were free in Christ to do even that which was socially unacceptable (5:2). What did Paul think they should they have done instead? They should have "removed" this man from their assembly (5:2). So Paul, even though physically absent from the church, pronounced judgment upon the man who engaged in sexual immorality, and told the Corinthians to "hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord" (5:5). In other words, they were to exclude him from their community, but in the hope that, in the end, he would be saved. Exclusion (what we call excommunication) is not merely punishment. Rather, it is a discipline by which a person might bring his or her life in line with God's desires.

But this did not mean that the Corinthian believers should have nothing to do with sexually immoral unbelievers. In an earlier letter Paul had written that the Corinthians should not "associate with sexually immoral persons" (5:9). The Corinthians interpreted this to mean that they should cut off relationship with "the immoral of this world" and live in some sort of holy huddle (5:10). But this was not what Paul had intended. Rather, he meant that the Corinthians should not associate "with anyone who bears the name of brother or sister who is sexually immoral or greedy, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber" (5:11). To make his point crystal clear, he added, "Do not even eat with such a one" (5:11). Yet the Corinthians should have relationship with pagan sinners in order to share the gospel of Christ with them.

Once again we stumble over the peculiar nature of Christian inclusiveness. In some ways it is

exceptionally inclusive, but at the same time it doesn't simply include everyone without regard to their behavior or condition. Christian brothers and sisters who persist in sin without repentance should be excluded from fellowship, in the hope that someday they might be included once again, after they repent. Yet Christians were to continue to have relationship with non-Christians who persisted in sin, in the hope of drawing them to Christ.

What do we learn from 1 Corinthians? I'd summarize thus:

- 1. We Christians must reach out to all persons in love, excluding none from our evangelistic effort. □2. We must not exclude people from the Christian community because they lack worldly status, wealth, education, or certain spiritual experiences. □3. We must strive to include all persons in the body of Christ, even and especially those who are different from us. □4. Yet we must not tolerate persistent sin in a brother or sister who will not repent. Such a person must be excluded from the community, in the hope that such exclusion will be redemptive in that person's life. □5. In particular, Christians are not to associate with other believers who persist in sexual sin.

Though the life setting of 1 Corinthians is different from that of Jesus, the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion are quite similar. Jesus hung out with "sinners" and invited them to join his community. Yet repentance was a condition for their inclusion (Mark 1:14-15). Furthermore, Jesus did not include those whose hearts were not open to the reign of God.

This double standard can be confusing. It was for the Corinthians in the first century, and it continues to be for Christians in our day who believe that absolute inclusiveness is essential to the church of Christ. How much simpler it would be if we were to avoid relationship with all sinners, or, conversely, to accept all people no matter what their behavior. Yet, according to the New Testament, we are to reach out to all people regardless of their sinful condition. And, at the same time, if someone in the church continues to sin and will not repent, we are to exclude that person, in the hope that he or she will repent. Only true repentance leads to inclusion once more in the Christian community.

You can see why this was a bit confusing to the Corinthians, and why it continues to confuse Christians today. The leaders of the Episcopal church, the ones whose rhetoric led me to deal with the issue of inclusiveness, rightly point out how Jesus and the early church reached out to all people in love, excluding nobody from their gracious outreach. But they draw from this the false conclusion that all people are to be included in the church and even in church leadership without regard to their sexual behavior.

Of course you don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out where I'm going in this series. In my next post I'll consider in more detail how the church today might imitate the inclusiveness of Jesus when it comes to its relationship with homosexual persons.

□How Should Christians Be Inclusive of Gays and Lesbians? □

Introduction

My discussion of Christian inclusiveness was ignited by comments from several leaders in the

Episcopal Church. They defend their inclusion of gays and lesbians, both as church members and as ordained leaders, even bishops, by pointing to the inclusiveness of Jesus. According to Bishop Jon Bruno of Los Angeles, Jesus “had an unconditional love of all humanity, allowing for no outcast in this community as he built the true religion, a religion of inclusion and love.” For this reason Bishop Bruno supports the full inclusion of gays and lesbians in the Episcopal church. Similarly, another Episcopal leader states that the “first principle” of the church is “the boundless love of God and its absolute inclusiveness.” On this basis the church should ordain gays and lesbians, join them in marriage, and so forth.

So, does the inclusiveness of Jesus, rightly understood, lead to these conclusions?

Of course it’s easy to throw around the word “inclusiveness” carelessly, without tying its meaning to the actual practice of Jesus and his earliest followers. For this reason, in the earlier posts of this series I went back to the biblical texts to examine the ways that Jesus and his disciples were and were not inclusive. What I found was a curiously mixed picture. In some ways Jesus and the early church were radically and scandalously inclusive. In other ways Jesus and the early church were surprisingly exclusive. Jesus, for example, did not include within his community those who were unwilling to receive the kingdom of God humbly and with repentance. Moreover, he did not include in the kingdom sinners as sinners, but rather offered them the possibility of forgiveness, wholeness, and new life. Repentant and redeemed sinners were included by Jesus. Similarly, the earliest church included people across the social, economic, and ethnic spectrum. Yet they were instructed by the Apostle Paul to exclude a Christian brother who engaged in sexual immorality and was unwilling to repent.

Therefore those that argue from the inclusiveness of Jesus to the inclusion of gays and lesbians in the church today are making one giant assumption, namely, that gays and lesbians are not engaging in sinful behavior from which they should repent as they enter the kingdom of God. Now it might turn out that this assumption is correct, of course. But, correct or not, it is an absolutely essential tenet of the “inclusivist” argument. And it’s one which inclusivists rarely defend anymore. They simply assume it to be true and move on. Yet if this assumption turns out to be incorrect, then their argument for inclusion falls apart (at least from a biblical perspective, or from the perspective of Jesus).

Yet, if we want to be faithful to the real Jesus, not to mention to the Scripture, then we can’t simply assume that homosexual activity is right. Rather, we need to look at what the biblical texts actually say about homosexual behavior in light of broader biblical teaching about sexuality. This is a complex topic, I’ll admit. The best book on the subject, *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, by Robert A. J. Gagnon, contains 520 dense pages. So in this post I can’t even begin to lay out the exegetical arguments involved in this debate. Yet I find Gagnon’s arguments to be extremely persuasive.

The power of his arguments can be seen in the fact that very few gay and lesbian advocates in the church try anymore to argue for their position from specific biblical texts. This was a common approach in the seventies and eighties, but it is rarely used today. Gay advocates still use scriptural generalities, like “justice-love” or “inclusiveness” or “love of neighbor.” But they almost never argue from the biblical passages that speak of sexuality and homosexuality to defend their position. Why? Because this approach has been shown by Gagnon and others to be a

dead end. It just doesn't work. So gay advocates generally refer to the Bible as "one" authority among many, giving equal voice to things like "modern psychology" and "the experiences of our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters." They don't refer much to Christian tradition either, because this also falls consistently on the biblical side of the argument.

For Christians who still believe that the Bible is in some strong sense God's Word, and that it trumps other authorities, the only reasonable conclusions about biblical teaching do not bode well for gay and lesbian inclusivists. I've studied this issue in depth for over twenty-five years, and here are some of the conclusions I have drawn from this study:

- 1. Whenever the Bible speaks positively about human sexuality, as it often does, this is always in the context of male-female sexuality. Clearly, God created sex as something to be shared between a man and a woman, and in this context it can be a very good thing. □2. Whenever the Bible speaks directly about same-sex practice of any kind, it always shows such practice to be wrong. One cannot point to a clearly "pro-homosexual" biblical text without reading between the lines so much that you can't even make out what the original lines actually said. □3. There is no compelling argument from Scripture for the rightness of homosexual activity. At best there is a very spurious argument from silence, an argument which, by the way could also be used to defend sex between an adult and a child, or between a brother and a sister, etc. (Jesus explicitly didn't condemn sex in these contexts either, as far as we can tell from the gospels.) □4. Homosexual activity is sinful, no matter what the context. Yes, even in a loving and committed relationship between people of the same sex, sexual activity is morally wrong. This fact doesn't deny other good aspects of the relationship. It simply means that two people of the same sex should not engage in sexual intimacy together. □5. Christians are called to love all people, including those who engage in homosexual behavior. The behavior of many Christians towards homosexuals (unhelpfully called homophobia by gay advocates) often falls far short of the biblical ideal, or flatly contradicts it. This is truly tragic and just as sinful as homosexual behavior.
6. Yet just because many Christians have been unloving towards gay and lesbian persons, this does not mean that we should now love them by affirming their sexual behavior. From a biblical point of view, love never means saying that sin is okay. When a Christian brother or sister engages in sexual immorality of any kind – gay or straight – that person needs to hear God's call to sexual holiness, as well as God's offer of forgiveness and restoration. Love means telling this person the truth, even if it is difficult to say and to hear. So then, how should the church of Jesus be inclusive when it comes to gays and lesbians? I'll answer this question tomorrow.

□How Should Christians Be Inclusive of Gays and Lesbians? □

(Reaching Out With Love)

In my last post I began to consider the question of how Christians should be inclusive of gays and lesbians. I explained that an essential element of this answer is one's view of the morality of homosexual behavior. If one believes that this behavior can be morally acceptable, then one will envision a different sort of inclusiveness than the person who believes that homosexual behavior is sinful. I explained, moreover, that I fall into the latter camp, believing that homosexual

activity, even in the context of a genuinely loving relationship, is wrong according to biblical standards.

I must confess, however, that I have come to this conclusion in spite of my own feelings. I spent several years studying as a member of the community of Harvard Divinity School (though I was officially a Ph.D. student in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences). This community was, and still is, strongly pro-gay and pro-lesbian. Those students who believed that homosexuality was wrong were often mocked as homophobic and rejected as unloving. My desire to fit in gave me every reason to try and believe that homosexual behavior was okay in some settings. (For the most part I kept my beliefs about homosexual activity to myself.)

More importantly, throughout my life I have had several dear gay and lesbian friends, some who were and still are genuine believers in Christ. These friends had tried hard to live heterosexual or celibate lives. But, in the end, their homosexual feelings overwhelmed these efforts and they adopted a gay or lesbian lifestyle. My heart went out to these friends, and I would have loved to affirm them in their homosexuality, to tell them that I believed their choice of a homosexual lifestyle was just fine. I hated hurting their feelings and, in most cases, losing their friendship because I couldn't affirm them in the way they required. Besides, I would have greatly preferred to be on the side of the perceived liberator, setting gay and lesbian people free from social condemnation, rather than on the side of the perceived persecutor, telling gay and lesbian people that their sexual actions were wrong. So I tried to find a way to justify gay liberation from Scripture. But I just couldn't do it with integrity. Yes, I knew that there were some scholars who had tried to do this (John Boswell, for example; see also Robert Gagnon's online critique of Boswell) But I saw the obvious flaws in their scholarship. (This was before Gagnon sealed the case for the sinfulness of homosexual behavior in his magisterial book, by the way.) So, in the end I faced a difficult choice. Would I hang onto the authority of Scripture and reject the rightness of homosexual behavior? Or would I compromise biblical authority in order to affirm my friends and join the side of perceived liberation? Well, if you read my last post, you already know the answer. I choose to uphold biblical authority, and therefore I believed – and still do believe -- that homosexual behavior is wrong.

So how, therefore, can I be inclusive of gay and lesbian people in a way that is modeled after Jesus? Like Jesus and the early church, my inclusiveness cannot be absolute or unqualified. I cannot say to my gay and lesbian friends, "Sure, come be a part of the church and you'll be affirmed in your sexual choices. You can be in leadership. Your sexual activity isn't a problem." To do so would, in my view, be inconsistent with the actual inclusiveness of Jesus, as we have seen in this series. Moreover, I believe it would be truly unloving to minimize or affirm the homosexual behavior of my friends. It is never loving to affirm people's sinfulness, no matter how much they argue to the contrary.

Yet, at the same time, if I'm going to be like Jesus, I must reach out in love to all broken and sinful people. Part of reaching out in love means welcoming people into the grace of the community of Jesus. So, is a gay person welcome to worship in my church? Absolutely! But will we affirm that person's sexual behavior. No. Will we encourage this person to seek God's will for his entire life, including his sexuality? Absolutely! Will we condemn him and single him out in his sin. No. Will we call him to repentance and to experience God's forgiveness, just like the rest of us? Absolutely! Will we elect him to church office if he continues to live a gay lifestyle?

No. Will this man be free to bring his lover to church with him? Absolutely! I hope they come together to worship, frankly. Will they be free to be physically expressive on the church campus, much as a husband and wife might be in a public setting? No. Will we pray for them and seek to love them in imitation of Christ? Absolutely! Will we bless their relationship in some sort of civil union or marriage? No.

This isn't just theoretical for me. I have found myself in real situations like this with real people – in fact, with close friends. In my next post I'll share one of these situations, as well as reflect further on how Christians can reach out in love to gay and lesbian persons.

□How Should Christians Be Inclusive of Gays and Lesbians? □

(Inclusion in Churches?)

In my last post I tried to show how I, as a Christian, and how my church, as a congregation committed to the authority of Scripture, might include and not include a gay person. I readily admit that what I described is open to debate. I'm not at all convinced I've got the details worked out correctly. As I noted in my study of Jesus and the early church, genuine Christian inclusiveness can be pretty messy in practice. I've certainly found this to be the case.

The sort of situation I described in my last post, where a gay person wanted to be actively involved in my church, isn't just theoretical for me. On several occasions I have found myself as a pastor facing this very challenge. One time, in particular, the person who wanted to be fully included in my church as a homosexual was a dear friend.

This friend had tried for years to be heterosexual or celibate. Yet, after countless hours of counseling and prayer, she decided that she was a lesbian, and that she was going to engage in homosexual behavior. Ironically, she did not argue that God had made her that way because God endorses homosexuality. Rather, she saw herself like a blind person, someone with a deep wound. She thought of lesbian behavior as rather like Braille, a second-best substitute until she was healed. She believed that when she finally stood before the Lord, she would have lesbian feelings no longer because she would be fully whole. So my friend was not at all your typical gay advocate. Her theology, though confused at points, was much closer to correct biblical theology. In many ways she was quite orthodox. Moreover, she continued to take the Bible very seriously, though choosing to follow the scholars whom I had discounted when it came to passages that addressed homosexual behavior. Nothing I could say or do would change her mind.

This friend was a member of my church. She loved the church and very much wanted to remain in it. "Can I still come to worship?" she asked. "Yes, at least for now," I answered, "but you must understand that you'll sometimes hear things that will be very hard for you to hear." I realized that at some point in the future some kind of church discipline might be appropriate in her case, but that was far off. I still had hope that my friend might be led to repent if she were included in a loving, worshipping, forgiving community.

She continued, "And if I have a lover and we're in a committed relationship together, can she come to church with me?" "Yes," I answered. "And what if we hold hands or something like that? Would that be okay?" "No, I don't think so," I replied. "That would seem to imply

endorsement of your relationship, and it would model something that isn't right." "And would the church ever be able to bless our relationship?" she wondered. "No. I don't think that would ever happen." "Then," my friend concluded sadly, "I don't think I can come to the church anymore. If you can't accept me as I am, if you can't approve of my choices, then I just can't be there. I need to go to a church that can affirm me as a lesbian." And so she did, beginning to attend a church she really didn't like much at all, but one that approved of homosexual behavior.

I understood my friend's predicament. And my heart ached for her. Yet I knew that I had to uphold biblical truth in this situation, no matter what her feelings or my feelings might be. So my friend left our church, never to return. Our friendship continued for a while, but in time it ended. Though I was willing to remain her friend, she needed affirmation I just couldn't give. I understood, but did not feel free to give her what she thought she needed.

Many gays and lesbians, and many of their advocates, say that one cannot love a homosexual person without endorsing his or her homosexuality. But I do not believe this to be true. In fact I know it's not true. Jesus loved sinners, yet still called them to repent of their sin. And we should try to do the same. This means we should include gays and lesbians within our loving outreach. It does not mean we should include gays and lesbians in the church in such a way that they are affirmed for their sexual choices.

A common objection to what I've just said goes like this: "So you're telling me that I can come to your church, but I can't be openly gay. And you're telling me that you will love me, but not affirm me. And you're telling me that I can be in your church, but that I cannot be an elder or a pastor. This is a double standard. It's not loving and it's not inclusive." My response is to point out that we aren't singling out gay and lesbian people for special treatment (or mistreatment, as they might claim). This is exactly how we deal with all sinners (and we all are sinners). We invite sinners to church, but don't affirm their sin. We seek to love sinners, but not accept their sinfulness. We allow sinners to fill our pews – otherwise nobody would be in church, including pastors – yet we do not ordain those who say that they intend to keep on sinning. To this the gay person would object, "Yes, but I don't think my behavior is wrong!" To which I would say, "Yes, that's the rub. That is indeed the difference. But it's a real difference, not something we can pretend doesn't matter. If we believed that your sexual behavior was okay, then we'd be in a completely different position altogether. But my church and I have chosen to stand on the bedrock of biblical authority. So, here we stand, and we can do no other. I'm sorry this seems so unloving to you."

Now I've also heard Christians object that even to include gay and lesbian people within a church is wrong. "We can't have that sort of person in our church," they argue, "because this means that we're approving of their behavior." But my question is: "Where do you draw the line? Will you exclude all sinners from church, not only homosexual sinners, but also heterosexual sinners, and lustful people, and prideful people, and judgmental people, and . . . ?" Yes, there is a point when a person who will not repent from persistent sin should be excluded from the community in the hope that he or she will repent. But how can we justify rushing to apply church discipline in the case of homosexual sin when we rarely (if ever) apply it in other cases? Besides, don't we believe that people experience grace and healing in the context of the church? And isn't this the very thing we want gay and lesbian people to experience?

In my next post in this series I want to examine examples of how Christians have in fact reached out to gay and lesbian people in love, including them within their Christ-like embrace without endorsing their sinful behavior.

□How Should Christians Be Inclusive of Gays and Lesbians? □

(A Personal Story About a Church)

In my last three posts in this series I've been trying to explain how Christians who believe that homosexual behavior is sinful, can, nevertheless be inclusive of gays and lesbians. Following the example of the real Jesus, rather than some figment of liberal theological imagination, we should reach out to gays and lesbians with genuine love and concern, though not endorsing their sinful behavior. More than once I have mentioned that fact that this is not some novel way to treat homosexuals, but is consistent with how Christians ought to relate to all people.

In my last post I shared a personal story from my own experience as a pastor of a lesbian woman and her relationship to my church. In this post I want to relate a different kind of story, an account of the leadership of a church trying to wrestle with how to reach out to persons with HIV/AIDS.

In the late 80's and early 90's I was on the staff of the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood. Dr. Lloyd Ogilvie was the Senior Pastor (before he became the Chaplain of the U.S. Senate). At that time the AIDS crisis had come to Hollywood, especially because of the large numbers of gay men in the community. Many were dying of AIDS, often without the love and support of other human beings. Families were also going through terrible times as their sons and brothers were dying in a most painful and tragic way. Dr. Ogilvie believed that our church needed to do something for AIDS victims and their families.

But the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood had always taken a strong, clear, biblical stand on human sexuality. Outreach to persons with HIV, most of whom got the virus through homosexual activity, raised challenging questions. How much emphasis would the church place upon the wrongness of homosexual behavior as it reached out to AIDS victims? Too much emphasis would chase away the very people we sought to reach. Yet we didn't want to appear as if we endorsed a gay and lesbian lifestyle.

At first the staff worked hard on a position paper to lay a foundation for this ministry. We reflected for long hours on the biblical call to love, and what this would mean in our situation. We considered how we could reach out to persons within the gay culture of Hollywood without compromising our beliefs about homosexuality. In the end, our position paper laid out the basic biblical principles and their implications for our ministry. The bottom line was that we sought to reach out with the love of Christ to those around us who so desperately needed it. We would remain true to our convictions, but not let these convictions keep us from loving our hurting neighbors.

The staff presented the paper at the meeting of the board of elders (what Presbyterians call the Session). We had at least two long conversations before we took a vote. Some elders were eager to begin a ministry for persons with AIDS and their families. Others were hesitant, fearful that

doing this would imply our approval of homosexual activity. After much discussion and prayer, we finally voted. Honestly, I can't remember if the vote was unanimous or not, but I know it was almost completely in favor of beginning the new ministry.

And so a new ministry was begun. Now you might suppose that the gay community wouldn't welcome a ministry such as this, given the Hollywood church's position on homosexual behavior. But you'd be wrong, for the most part. The secular gay community, sensing the genuine heart of the church for people in pain, accepted it with gratitude. In fact one gay and lesbian organization – I can't remember the details, sorry – actually gave an award to the church's ministry. Ironically, the only real criticism I heard of this ministry was from liberal Presbyterians who resented the ministry because it didn't endorse homosexual behavior. (Sigh!)

Over the years, dozens if not hundreds of people received the love of Christ through people in the church. Volunteers did not make a big deal out of the wrongness of homosexual behavior. And, frankly, when you're caring for persons with advanced AIDS, sexual behavior just isn't an issue. The ministry never misrepresented its beliefs about human sexuality, but, frankly these were rarely a topic of concern. (If you go to the emergency room with a heart attack, having eaten poorly and exercised rarely all of your life, the doctors and nurses don't begin by chewing you out for your bad choices in the past. There's a time and a place for everything.)

Those who received the love and care of the church were grateful, as were their families, and, yes, as were their gay partners. Many volunteers learned to love people without seeing them first as gay or straight or whatever, but as human beings worthy of Christ's love.

Did the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood include gay people through this ministry? Yes, in the sense that they were included within the love and grace of Jesus Christ present among his people. Yes, in the sense that they were welcome in worship and in other areas of ministry. But such inclusion did not involve approving of sinful behavior.

In my next post I'll tell one more story, another personal one from the experience of my own family. Stay tuned . . .

□How Should Christians Be Inclusive of Gays and Lesbians? □

(A Personal Story about a Family)

Yes, this post contains yet another illustration of how Christians can "include" gays and lesbians without affirming their sexual choices. You may wonder why I'm adding so many illustrations to this series. It's not just filler, I assure you. Rather, I think the illustrations help to make my point, and they also help you to see how the theoretical position I have defended can be worked out in real life situations.

My last post focused on the effort of the First Presbyterian Church of Hollywood to care for people, primarily gay men, who were stricken with AIDS. The church was able to do this without compromising its understanding of biblical morality.

Today's post is much more personal. It has to do with a gay man who entered the life of my

family in the midst of a crisis. (If this story seems familiar to you, I have included it in a couple of my books.)

Twenty years ago my father was dying slowly and painfully of cancer. His failing health laid a heavy burden on my mother, as well as upon the rest of my family. A friend of my sister learned what we were going through and offered to live in my parents' home so he could help my mom and dad. Rick was a loving man who cheered up my parents with his humor and excellent cooking. He helped care for my father in many ways. Rick also happened to be gay. He was not a Christian, so he didn't see anything wrong with his lifestyle.

When Rick moved in, my mother made clear what she believed about sex outside of marriage. She asked him to respect her values in her home, which Rick was glad to do. During the months of his stay, he and my mother had many discussions about the most important things in life. They talked about family, love, God, sex, death, and dozens of other subjects. In time, Rick became like a member of our family. He shared our holiday celebrations and our long vigils at my dad's bedside. Rick's presence with us was a true gift in a desperate time. He was included as a member of our family, loved as if he were a brother, and deeply appreciated. Shortly after my father died, Rick discovered that he was HIV positive. In those days medical treatment was less advanced so he quickly developed full-blown AIDS. During that painful time, Rick continued to be a part of our family, sharing our life as we shared his.

I'm sure there were some who wondered about Rick's presence in our family. My mother was a highly regarded leader in the church, a woman of exemplary Christian maturity. Perhaps some people questioned her inclusion of Rick in our family. Though my mother sometimes struggled over how to relate to him, she never abandoned her commitment to biblical morality. Yet she continued to open her heart to Rick in his time of suffering, even as he had opened his heart to us when my dad was dying.

Rick eventually moved home to Canada to spend his last few months with his family. During that period, my mother visited him. Once again, they talked about what it meant to be a Christian. Through much suffering, Rick had come to realize his need for God. He finally put his trust in Jesus. Rick's own imminent death, a tragic loss for those of us who loved him, would be his eternal gain. He is with the Lord today, largely because my mother was willing to include him within our family and within the scope of her love.

As I look back on Rick's time in my family, I don't think of him as "the gay man who lived with us." Yes, he was gay, but he was so much more than merely a sexual being who did things I didn't think were right. He was a loving, kind, talented, fun human being. He was a man who cared for my family in a time when we most needed it. And, though I never was able to see Rick after he put his faith in Christ, I think of him now as a dear brother in the Lord. One of the things I look forward to about heaven is being able to greet Rick and tell him more clearly than I ever did before, how much he meant to me and my family

□ Concluding Reflections □

When I write an article or a book, I always begin with a detailed outline that lays out my main points and the overall structure of what I'm planning to produce. Blogging is different. When I

do a series, I start off in a general direction and go. Rarely do I anticipate all the twists and turns in the blogging road ahead until I get to them. I'm also not entirely sure when it's time to stop until I get to the end. So there's an adventure in blogging that I don't experience as much in other kinds of writing.

The adventure of this series on "Christian Inclusiveness" is just about to end. In this final post, I want to add a few final reflections.

As you probably know if you've been following along, this series began as a response to leaders in the Episcopal Church who were basing their full inclusion of gays and lesbians in church leadership on "the inclusiveness of Jesus." One spoke of "the true religion of Jesus, a religion of inclusion and wisdom." Another claimed that the "first principle" of the church was "the boundless love of God and its absolute inclusiveness." The use of inclusiveness by these leaders troubled me because it seemed overly general and in many ways inconsistent with what I had always envisioned as the actual inclusiveness of Jesus. But, frankly, I had never studied this topic with intentionality. So it seemed good to do such a study and share the results with you.

These results were fascinating to me, but not altogether simple. In fact the inclusiveness of Jesus was at the same time extraordinarily broad and curiously limited. I ended up doing three posts on "The Inclusiveness of Jesus" and three on "The Exclusiveness of Jesus." Just because Jesus loved unconditionally, that did not imply his full acceptance of all people just as they were. Some, like lepers, he healed so that they might enter his community as whole people. Others, like unrepentant religious leaders, he excluded (or recognized their self-exclusion) quite assertively. Clearly the inclusiveness of Jesus was not of the "y'all come just as you are" variety. Though he reached out in love to all, and though he invited all into the kingdom, only those who received the kingdom as a child, with openness and repentance, in fact were included within the community of Jesus. Remember the basic message of Jesus included a call to repent: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15).

Therefore, to interpret the unconditional love of God in Christ as some sort of "absolute inclusiveness" is a mistake. God invites all people into relationship with himself. But entry into this relationship and maintenance of this relationship depend on such things as repentance, faith in Jesus, and a life of "walking in the light" (1 John 1:5-9). To say that, on the basis of Jesus's own practice, the church should include all people just as they are is simply wrong.

In point of fact, the advocates of inclusiveness within the Episcopal Church don't actually practice the sort of inclusiveness they seem to promote. They don't, for example, say to those they label as homophobic, "Y'all come. It's just fine if you continue to act unlovingly towards gays and lesbians. We practice absolute inclusiveness here." In fact many of the strongest proponents of inclusiveness in the Episcopal Church are increasingly moved to exclude those in their own denomination whom they label as fundamentalist because of their commitment to the authority of Scripture. Now I would in fact defend this notion of limited inclusiveness, because I think absolute inclusiveness is both impossible and wrong. The church needs to be more precise and discerning when it comes to inclusion (and exclusion). Of course, though I defend the idea of limited inclusiveness, such as practiced by the Episcopal Leaders who would include gays and exclude "fundamentalists," I think they're making precisely the wrong choices about whom to

include and whom to exclude.

Yet, having said this, I must add that the church's zeal to exclude gay and lesbian people has, sadly, far outstripped its commitment to Christ-like love. Many Christians practice a double standard, whereby homosexual sin is worse than heterosexual sin, the one unforgivable, the other easily overlooked. A father once admitted to me that he continued in relationship with his daughter, who was living "in sin" with her boyfriend, while he had completely broken relationship with his son, who had chosen a gay lifestyle. This sort of double standard is indefensible. The church needs desperately to reach out to all persons, including gays and lesbians, with the forgiving, healing, renewing love of Christ.

During this series I have received an unusually high volume of e-mail. Some of it has been critical of my ideas, and this is fine. Nobody has insulted my character or accused me of homophobia, and this I appreciate. But most of my mail has been appreciative in a particular way. It seems that many Christians have felt as if they have been forced to accept one of two options when it comes to homosexual persons and the church. Option #1 is the way of complete inclusiveness, whereby Christian love means accepting gays and lesbians as they are. Period. Option #2 is the way of legalistic judgmentalism, in which gays and lesbians are condemned and rejected for their sin, often with a harshness that is so contradictory to the way of Jesus. People have explained to me that they have often been pressed – by those on both extremes of this issue – to choose either option, as if these were the only real possibilities.

The idea of "another way" has been appealing to many who have written to me. They want to uphold biblical orthodoxy when it comes to sexual ethics. For this reason they believe that homosexual behavior is wrong. But they don't want to be unloving, judgmental people. Rather, they want to love as Jesus loved, offering the grace and mercy of Christ to all people, including gays and lesbians. My theoretical discussion of inclusiveness, as well as my real-life examples, have been an encouragement to many people that this is not only right, but also possible. For the chance to offer such encouragement I am truly grateful.

4.2. *Compare Jesus' behaviour towards unpopular or despised people (e.g. tax-collectors, Samaritans, sinners Gentiles, lepers) with the behaviour of his contemporaries among Jewish religious leaders towards such people.*

In Luke's Gospel, in 4: 4-18, we begin with hearing Jesus reading from the scroll of Isaiah in Nazareth, in which we learn of why Jesus was sent here and what he was planning to do. This is the key moment in the Gospel in which we learn about who the outcasts are in Jesus' opinion. □At first, Jesus started off by saying "...to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." which was just another way of saying the Jubilee Year. However, instead of Jesus actually being here to free the slaves and return the property like many Jews thought; he actually came here to good news to the poor, proclaim release for the prisoners, recover the sight of the blind and to let the broken victims go free. □These people are who Jesus' considers that needs the most help, and in his ministries and missions, these people are the ones he talks about and helps all the time whether he goes to a city or town, which is shown on many occasions.

One of the attitudes we discover about Jesus regarding the outcasts is that he views the outcasts

to still be part of the society that Jesus lives in, and he proves this to the other people by associating himself with them, on many occasions no matter what people thought of them or what sins they could of committed, as Jesus was here to help them. □ The most noticeable example out of these parables is in The Calling of Levi (5: 27-32), in which a Tax collector called Levi, who at the time was considered an outcast because the population regarded Tax collectors as evil, was asked by Jesus to “follow him”, before Levi held a banquet for Jesus. Now, it was Pharisee’s and Scribes who questioned what Jesus was doing, which is when we discover one of Jesus’ attitudes; it isn’t the good people that need his help, but actually the outcasts that need his help, as he firstly says “It is not the healthy that need a doctor; but the sick,” before he says “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” This just confirms what Jesus said at Nazareth, that he is here to help the outcasts, but he is also here to clear the sins of the ones that need it, which in this parable is Levi, as people considered him to be committing sin by being a tax collector. Tannehill agrees with what Jesus says in this parable, as he says that the banquet wasn’t just an ordinary meal, but one of celebration, which in Tannehill’s eyes, was a celebration of Levi’s sins being banished for him confirming to Jesus that he was a sinner but still had great faith in God. Also, Caird rightfully points out as well that Jesus was doing what he was sent here to do: spend time with those who needed him or God the most, which in a lot a cases was the sinners. □ Another Example of Jesus accepting the outcasts would be Zacchaeus (19:1-10), where Zacchaeus was also a Tax collector, and when Jesus was passing through Jericho, Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, which showed his faith towards him, where Jesus then said he would be staying around his house, to the joy of Zacchaeus. However, once again, many people were sceptical with what Jesus was saying, with the quote many of them said was “Guest of a sinner?!!” which shows how Zacchaeus was viewed at the time; However, we once again see that Jesus is here to help the outcasts, as he says “For the son of man has come to seek and to save the lost.” which is a reference to those who have sinned and now have nothing at all, which is what Zac confirms to everyone by saying what he was going to do, all in the name of God. □ In addition, the main outcasts that were refused to be any part of society were Lepers as they were deemed impure, so they were banished away from towns, yet Jesus still goes out and associates himself with them regardless of their condition, as even though he doesn’t touch them he still heals them no matter what.

Another attitude we see that Jesus has with the outcasts is that they have more faith to God and himself compared to those who regard them selves as Pious and faithful to God; this shows that the outcasts would do anything for God/Jesus, which Jesus greatly respects. □ A good example of this is The Parable of The Good Samaritan (10:29-37), in which Jesus tells a lawyer about how a innocent man was robbed and beaten whilst travelling to Jericho, and whilst he was on the floor bleeding, a Priest and a Levite who were supposedly very pious, passed along the same road, but just ignored the man and carried on without a second thought. However, a Samaritan passed along the road as well. Moreover, he stopped and helped the man before taking him to an inn to recover. At the time, Samaritans were also regarded as outcasts as well, so the point Jesus was trying to make was that the Samaritan showed the most faith by helping the traveller, whilst the other two refused to help as they didn’t know whether the man was alive or dead, which would of made them impure, but this wasn’t the best of claims as according to the Mishnah, they would have been allowed to help the person, according to Caird. What is interesting to note is that Tannehill says that without the Samaritan in the story, it wouldn’t as important, but with him being there, it shows that he doesn’t care who the man could be, as for all we know it could be a

Jew, he wanted to help him, which shows that amount of faith he has and also confirms Jesus' attitudes. □ Another way of showing this attitude by Jesus is of the Immoral Woman (7: 36-50) who was a prostitute, so the community saw her as a sinner, making her an outcast. However, when she comes up to Jesus and cleans his feet with her tears and dries them with her hair, he doesn't care what role she is, because she has shown the most faith to him, and Jesus rightfully says "... You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet." In which he compares the Levite's to the woman, with him basically saying that she shows more faith to Jesus than they do to him.

- Jesus' attitude is that salvation is universal but dependant on those who show repentance, faith and act

Also in Luke's Gospel, another attitude of Jesus that is highlighted is that he feels even though salvation is universal, it depends on those who show repentance, faith and those who also act as well. □ A key example that shows this is the Healing of the Paralytic in (5:17-20), where the people carrying then man showed the most faith out of everyone in the crowd, because they could of easily have waited until the crowds had parted, but their faith in getting the man to Jesus was so much that they went to extraordinary measures to see Jesus, which included going through a roof in order to drop the man to Jesus. Jesus saw the faith in these men, and said to them that their sin has had been forgiven because they showed faith, but also acted as well. According to Tannehill, by these people showing their 'faith', Tannehill suggests that it is not a confession to Jesus/God, but actually meaning in trusting in Jesus and God instead. □ Another example is also the Parable of the Good Samaritan, because as the Samaritan was the only one to stop and help the injured man in the road, he showed that any sin's that he had were forgiven by God because he stopped off to act and help the man into recovery, which showed his faith in helping his 'neighbour' that was in need. Finally, the last example that shows this attitude in the Parable of The Lost sheep 15:7, where Jesus "there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents that over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance", which Jesus says that if one person alone who has sinned can repent their sins, Tannehill says that Heaven would be more happy for them, compared to those who live a righteous life overall and not repent.

- Jesus' attitudes is that their place in Society should be restored with healing

Firstly, an example that keeps popping up from time to time is the phrase "Your faith has saved you."

In addition, the Healing of the Paralytic is another example of Jesus' allowing the outcasts to have their places back in society be restored, as it says "when he saw their faith....your sins are forgiven you" as Jesus says, according to Tannehill, that it is not him that's heals the man and his friends sins, but it is their faith which does this for them instead; so if they are now 'pure' according to Mosaic Law, it allows then to be part of society again.

Finally, the last example which shows this attitude is in the Healing of the leper, in which the leper in question tells Jesus he can heal him if he chooses, which shows that the leper has faith in Jesus', but he doesn't want him to just heal him as according to Tannehill, excluded from society

and ritually unclean, but to heal him if Jesus wanted to., Jesus replies 5:13 “I do choose. Be made clean.” This shows that Jesus is willing. What is interesting to note is that when Jesus tells the leper to go show himself to the priest, he is hinting at the amount of exclusion there is at the time and that it is a major problem.

To what extent do these attitudes fit in with Judaism?

In the way Jesus treats the outcasts in Luke’s Gospels, we can learn multiple things about how these attitudes would have fitted in with Judaism, with some of them being good, but some of them being bad as well.

Firstly, when he was performing the healing of the outcasts that were ill, he tried to stick to Jewish tradition by telling the ones that had once been healed, to go to the priests in the area, as at the time, if an outcast had recovered or had been healed, he/she would have to go to the priest in the area in order for them to be reinstated back into the area; as only priests had the power to allow an outcast back into civilisation, so he was following the law that was in place at the moment. An example of this would be in the Healing of the 10 Lepers in Luke 17: 11-19, where after Jesus heals the lepers, he says “‘Go show yourselves to the priests.’ and as they went, they were made clean.” However, some people were angered and outraged when Jesus performed these healings because first of all, he didn’t heal via the proper channels, which was by going to a priest who would then pray to God, asking for forgiveness for the person that was ill. Jesus ignored all of this and just healed the person on the spot there and then with the power of God. This made people angry as they felt the power of healing was reserved for God alone, so they viewed Jesus’ claims as blasphemy to the society and God.

Another attitude that fitted in at the time was the Year of the Jubilee, which was every 50 years someone, according to Tannehill, and allows property to be reverted back to its original owners and servants would be released. So naturally, when the Jews at the time heard that Jesus had come along to change things, they naturally thought that he was the “messiah” that would bring along this freedom. However, even though Jesus was the messiah, he actually was not here for the Year of the Jubilee, but actually here to help the outcast, as he says in Luke 4:14-23. This caused the Jews to be upset as they did not understand why Jesus was doing this at all, so they naturally claimed that Jesus was being blasphemous.

Also, another attitude which raised some anger at the time was ritual cleanliness; as people who had skin diseases, bleeding or had touched the dead were considered to unclean, and therefore an outcast as well. The main issue, which raised the anger was that when Jesus healed the outcast, they had many diseases on them such as leprosy, but he regardless went on and touched them. Jews considered that if someone was to be healed, some rituals had to take place, but Jesus disregarded them, such as making sure that the ill person was pure as well as the priest or doctor, and went on and healed them, as he just simply touched them, which showed he wasn’t afraid to make himself unclean.

In addition, one of the main attitudes at the time was considering if Jesus was being

blasphemous. At the time, many Priests considered Jesus to be blasphemous as he went around disobeying many of the rules by healing the outcasts or forgiving their sins, because he is simply using the powers of God, as in their eyes he is being blasphemous, as many of them said “who is this that can forgive sins?” or in fact question what Jesus had done. □ However, what is interesting to note is that while the priests consider Jesus to be blasphemous, others actually look at him and consider him to be God due to what he has done and the powers he has. Jesus actually tells people that question him that he has the right to do these things, as in Healing of the paralytic 5:24; Jesus says, “The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” Which tells those who question him he has the right.

Overall, we see that even though some of the attitudes fit in with Judaism, the majority of them don't as they reject or make fun of what the Jew's believe in, even going as far as criticising them and making fun of them as well. However, Jesus does not do this on purpose, but he just does this in order to get his point across to everyone.

4.3. *Relate Jesus' parables of*

4.3.1. The Unforgiving Servant: Matthew 18:21-35

21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

22 Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.[g]

23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold[h] was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

26 “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.[i] He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until

he should pay back all he owed.

35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Lesson: God will not forgive you if you do not forgive others.

4.3.2. The Money lender: Luke 7:46-50

When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”

40 Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.”

“Tell me, teacher,” he said.

41 “Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

43 Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.”

“You have judged correctly,” Jesus said.

44 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

48 Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

49 The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

50 Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Lesson: Forgiven people show repentance

4.3.2. The Lost Sheep: Luke 15: 1-7

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. 2 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

3 Then Jesus told them this parable: 4 “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? 5 And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders 6 and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ 7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

Lesson: Repentance brings joy in heaven even over one soul

4.3.3. The Lost Coin Luke 7:8-10

8 “Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ 10 In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

4.3.4. The Good Samaritan: Luke 10: 25-37

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

26 “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

27 He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

28 “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

30 In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

36 “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

37 The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.”

Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Lesson: Love your enemy even in their difficult moment and do not rejoice over their misery.

4.3.5. The rich man and Lazarus: Luke 16: 19-31

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. 20 At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores 21 and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. 24 So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’

25 “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

27 “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, 28 for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

29 “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

30 “‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

31 “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

Lesson: Neglecting the vulnerable leads to eternal fire.

4.7. Give an account of occasions when Jesus commended Gentiles for their faith and response to God’s messengers and explain the significance of Jesus’ words on these occasions. (Matthew 8:5-13)

When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. 6 “Lord,” he said, “my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly.”

7 Jesus said to him, “Shall I come and heal him?”

8 The centurion replied, “Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say

the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

10 When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. 11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. 12 But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that moment.

Matthew 15:21-28

Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. 22 A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."

23 Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

25 The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.

26 He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

27 "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

28 Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Lesson: Trouble can cause instant faith in the life of a non-believer.

4.8. Distinguish between Christian opposition to evil. –behaviour and judging other people.

Matthew 7:1-5

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. 2 For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 4 How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

This statement does not mean people should close eyes on bad behaviour and evil. Probably Jesus is warning against the spirit of hypocrisy to condemn others while doing worse.

4.9. *Relate Jesus' teaching about love for enemies and tolerance and give example of Jesus putting these teachings into practice.*

Matthew 5:43-48

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Luke 6:27-36

27 “But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

32 “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Jesus demonstrated this teaching when he forgave the woman who was caught committing adultery. He also demonstrated it on the cross when He said: “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing”. Jesus is calling his followers to an extraordinary life.

4.10. *Show how Jesus' attitudes towards other people can be followed in modern Zambia.*

Jesus' attitude towards other people can be followed in modern Zambia. There could many ways out there, but these three are obvious:

- a. Believing that Jesus was human and if He did it, Zambians can also do it.
- b. Jesus was a gentle teacher who could not teach things that are not attainable by people.
- c. Reading scripture and associating with people who follow Christ.

4.11. Compare Jesus' teaching on love, forgiveness and tolerance for all other people with the teachings of Zambian Humanism, Zambian tradition, Hinduism and Islam on these issues.

The teaching of Jesus on love, forgiveness and tolerance for other people have an ethical dimension that can be found in other institutions such as Hinduism, Zambian tradition, Zambian Humanism and others. Other religion can practice these values as just part of natural law.

Revision Questions

1. Illustrate different attitudes towards other people, particularly towards unpopular or despised people, expressed in modern Zambia.
2. Draw lessons from the parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15: 1-7
3. Draw lessons from The rich man and Lazarus: Luke 16: 19-31
4. Relate Jesus' teaching about love for enemies and tolerance and give example of Jesus putting these teachings into practice.
5. Show how Jesus' attitudes towards other people can be followed in modern Zambia.

UNIT V

JESUS AND FAMILY LIFE

(Det. 24: 1-4; Mark 3: 20-21; 6: 1-4; 10: 2-12; Luke 2: 41-52; Luke 7: 15; 8: 19-21; 9: 42 & 59-62; 10: 38-42; 11: 27-28; Luke 12: 51-53; 14: 26; 15: 11-32; 18: 28-30; John 2: 1-5; John 19: 25-27).

5.1. State and illustrate different attitudes to family life in traditional Zambian teaching, Islam, Hinduism in modern Zambia.

Attitudes towards family life differ among individuals in Zambian religious groups. There are those who are committed to family life and those that are not. Islam allows polygamy while Christianity does not even though there are Christians who have polygamous marriages, some hidden while others open. All religions would encourage faithfulness in the family, unity, support to one another and obedience to the parents. Problems in families do occur, but family counsellors do exist to help with reconciliation.

Family and Christianity

What do we mean by «Christianity»? We must clearly distinguish between what can be called «historic Christianity» and what, for want of a better expression, we shall call «modern Christianity». Whatever we have to say regarding the role of the family in Christianity will be in relation to the Historic Christian Faith and not to its «modern» counterfeit. The latter today all too often masquerades as the genuine article. The distinction we draw your attention to is not the vertical (or denominational) differentiation between various branches of the Church (Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism or Evangelicalism) but a horizontal demarcation which cuts through each of these segments of the Christian Faith. Within each Christian denomination you will both find partisans of the Historic Christian Faith as well as proponents of its «modern» critical travesty. I shall be speaking of the genuine Christian Faith, not of its travesty, of its apostasy.

How do we distinguish between the travesty and the genuine object? We shall give four answers.

- The first is the attitude towards the Bible. Does the Bible – the Jewish Tanak (the Old Testament) and the Apostolic Witness (the New Testament) constitute the inspired Word of God, and as such is it the final authority for the teachings of the Christian Faith? Or is the Christian and Jewish Bible a mere human word, useful and inspiring no doubt, but necessarily (as are all human achievements) fallible and in no sense normative for all men, all places and all times. This question of final authority is at the heart of whatever religious faith we hold. Is this final authority merely human, as in the fraudulent «modern» version of the Christian Faith? Is it thus merely rational, scientific, experiential, in short «critical» of God's revelation? Or is the authority of the Tanak and Apostolic Witness fully divine, as affirms the Historic Christian Faith whose final authority is inscribed in the very verbal texture of Divine Scripture? The historic faith of Eastern Orthodoxy (saint John Chrysostome and Father Justin Popovitch, for example), of Roman Catholicism (saint Thomas Aquinas and Pope Pius Xth, for example), of

Protestantism (John Calvin and Cornelius Van Til, for example) and of Evangelicalism (John Bunyan and Louis Gaussen, for example) all hold to the divine infallible authority of the Bible. So, from the perspective of the Historic Christian Faith the final standard for defining the role of the family will be found in the teachings of the Bible, both Tanak and Apostolic Witness. This normative Truth is not, in the final resort, to be discovered in the independent experience of the Church or in the autonomous experience of man, in the lessons of history or in the descriptions of sociology. I hasten here to add that whatever useful information can, in the light of Holy Scripture, be gleaned from these various fields must by no means be neglected.

- Secondly the Christian Faith bears a historic character. By this I mean that from the beginning of history the confrontation between the Historic Christian Faith and the errors which have, at all times, attacked it, have led to a better understanding both of its fundamental beliefs, and of the errors which constantly seek to destroy it. The Historic Christian Faith thus confesses with one voice the fundamental Creeds of the early Church :The Apostolic Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Formulations of Chalcedon, which have in time all been found faithful to their Scriptural foundation. The definition we shall give of the role Christianity assigns to the family takes into account this accumulation through history of carefully defined doctrinal wisdom. For example, the attacks directed against the family, both today and in the past, lead us better to understand its nature, its character and its function.
- Thirdly, the Historic Christian Faith holds to a realist epistemology. This means that the intellectual content of the Faith can be determined by the formulation of carefully defined concepts. Thus if these concepts are true dogmatically then their contrary formulations are necessarily false. Thus, with regard to the family, it is possible, from the point of view of the Historic Christian Faith, not only to define with precision the origin, the character, the role, the obligations and the religious finality of the family, but also to refute the deformations and travesties which over the centuries have attacked it and which are seeking utterly to destroy it today.
- Finally, the Historic Christian Faith is not just a doctrine, a theory, but life, a way of life, an ethical obedience, both social and personal, received as a gift from God. It thus seeks to conform to the revealed will of God, the Law of God, contained in the whole Scripture, Tanak and Apostolic Witness. This means that within the context of the Historic Christian Faith the role of the family must be acted out in history and that it must prove its truth by its concrete manifestation in the day to day life of society. It is clear that this restoration of the creational structures and functions of the family will be accomplished at the expense of those counterfeit deformations which appear again and again in history.

Having put these preliminary remarks out of the way, we shall now turn to our theme :The role of the family in Christianity. The role the Historic Christian Faith assigns to the family cannot adequately be grasped without an understanding of its origin and character, of its obligations and its final end or purpose. We shall briefly deal with each of these aspects.

1. The origin of the family

Scripture, both Tanak and Apostolic Witness, tells us that the family, like man himself, the stars,

the earth and the sea and all that they contain, is a creature, that is a social form directly created by God and that its members – each and every one of us – are finally accountable to Him for the way they treat this institution. The family thus bears the character of a permanent substantial form (like biological species or chemical elements) and as a result, like all created forms, cannot in the long run be destroyed by man. This allows us to draw the following conclusions : that the created family is constitutive of the human race and, even if today under dire attack, it cannot be abolished ; that all men and women, by their very nature, belong to the family ; that all human beings irrespective of their religious (or irreligious) beliefs can no more escape this divinely established framework than they can stop breathing, or refuse to use their digestive system, or reject the circulation of their blood. This inescapable permanence of the family explains our meeting here in Geneva (in former times, citadel of an exemplary expression of the Historic Christian Faith), for what has brought us together is our common conviction of the foundational nature of the family, family which, as a creational institution, includes us all within the scope of its authority. What can comfort us in the battle we are all waging in defense of the created family is its indestructible character, as indestructible as the order of the universe itself. This shows us the utter futility of the efforts of those who seek to destroy it. By the very nature God has given them they are themselves forced, with every new generation born, to reestablish the family. It is fitting for us to begin our considerations on The role of the family in Christianity by hearing, first the witness of the Torah, as it is consigned in the book of Genesis, then that of the Messiah Himself, as faithfully reported by the Apostolic Witness of Marc on the divine origin and creational character of the family.

And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone ; I will make him an help meet for him. [...] And Adam said : This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh ; and she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife ; and they shall be one flesh (Genesis 2 : 18 and 21-24).

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him ; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them : Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it ; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth (Genesis 1 : 27-28).

So much for the Torah. Let us now look at the Apostolic Witness.

And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him : Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife ? tempting him. And he answered and said unto them : What did Moses command you ? And they said : Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. And Jesus answered and said unto them : For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife ; and the two shall be one flesh ; so then they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put apart (Mark 10 : 2-9).

So both the Torah and the Apostolic Witness, both Moses and Jesus-Christ, witness to the divine origin of the creational family, to its fundamental unity, to its permanence and to its strictly exclusive and monogamous character. For the created family is a true substantial form, «one flesh», which «no man» (this includes of course the Population Council of New York and the homosexual lobbies the world over !) dare «put apart», that is to say destroy. What the text of

Genesis reveals is the dual aspect of the family : a) the communion and mutual support of husband and wife so wonderfully and delicately described in the Song of Songs, in the final chapter of the book of Proverbs and in the fifth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians ; and b) the natural consummation of marriage in the procreation of numerous children, fecundity universally considered by the Bible as a divine blessing. Such teachings from the Tanak are abundantly echoed by the writings contained in the Apostolic Witness, the New Testament.

2. The character (or structure) of the family

The idea that the modern cellular western family consisting of the impermanent union of two partners seen as functionally interchangeable, and accompanied by one or, at most, two children whose conception has been explicitly desired and carefully «planned», constitutes the Christian model of the family is very far removed from the truth. The Christian Biblical family has a very different character. It is above all a complex and highly organized institution. In some respects it is monarchical, in others aristocratic, and from another angle it can even be considered to have a democratic character.

Firstly it is basically monarchical. Husband and wife are both created in the image of God. Because of the fall they are also both sinners and the objects of God's judgment and of his mercy. In this respect there is no basic spiritual difference between man and woman. This in no way implies the exclusion of hierarchy from the structure of the family. The family institution is in fact strictly monarchical in the sense that the husband, far from being the mathematical «equal» of his wife, is very definitely her institutional superior. Both the Tanak and the Apostolic Witness are very clear on this count : the man is legally the head of the wife. The explanation of this conjugal hierarchy is fundamentally religious : both the Tanak and the Apostolic Witness teach us that the relationship between husband and wife constitutes an image of the relation between God and his creation, between the Lord God and his covenant people Israël and between Jesus-Christ – the Second Person of the Trinity – and the people of the renewed covenant, the Christian Church. The latter is made up of men and women of all nations who, by faith in the Messiah, have become heirs to the promises given to Abraham. The restoration of the Biblical structure of the family must thus be accompanied by the total rejection of our pseudo-mathematical equalitarianism, particularly that, posited by contemporary society between man and wife. We must resolutely return to the hierarchical structure of the biblical family. Of course, as the whole Bible makes abundantly clear, this structural and institutional hierarchy in no way condones any kind of tyrannical domination of the husband over his wife. But equally abhorrent to the Biblical family is the feminist domination of the man so common to our Western societies. Worse still is a family (or a society) ruled by the whims of children. The question here is one concerning the way in which institutions – in this case the family – are structured. It does not concern that of the intrinsic inferiority or superiority of different human beings. The reading of the last chapter of the Book of Proverbs and a careful examination of the vital role played by women in the ministry of Jesus-Christ and of the Apostle Paul should make this abundantly clear.

But the Biblical family is also structured in a hierarchical, an aristocratic manner. If the father is, as we have seen, the family's King, then his wife is his Queen. This is the reason why the Christian marriage ceremony was for so long in the West (until the time of Breughel the elder in the XVIth century) celebrated as a coronation. This is still the case today in the Orthodox tradition. Together, husband and wife form the government of the family. Thus the Christian

family is not governed by the sole monolithic (monist) authority of the Father and Husband, but by a kind of bi-cameral system of government. The authority of the wife counterbalances that of her husband. But she always remains under his final authority. That is why the Apostolic Witness speaks of the first sin not as that of Eve but as Adam's sin, for he as husband was, in the final resort, personally accountable to God for all that transpired under his authority. The theological reason for this dual form of government – a guarantee against arbitrary male absolutism – lies in the fact that if, on the one hand, man is personally created in the image of God, the family, on the other, is made after the image of the heavenly family, the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three divine Persons, One God.

Finally, in the Christian perspective the family has, to a certain degree, a democratic character. Not that in the family, as happens constantly in the perverted form of democracy everywhere prevalent in the West today, the majority of votes establishes truth or law. This is nothing else but the divinisation of Man and of Number. All the members of the household (the enlarged family) children as well as parents, servants and employees – all being created in the image of God – have their appropriate say (according to their age and condition) in the life and direction of the family. This, of course, under the direction of the parents and the final authority of the father. Here again we observe the beneficent effects of the divine model of the family, the Trinity. For we see in the structure of the Biblical family an emphasis both on its unity and its diversity. The children's say in the affairs of the family will grow as they become older until such time as they will in turn, each [...] leave his father and mother, and [...] cleave to his wife [or husband] ; and they shall be one flesh. Thus they will establish a new family on the basic model of that of their parents. This detachment of the new branch of the family from the patriarchal trunk allows for innovation. Its attachment to the basic model, ensures continuity. The result of the highly structured and diversified nature of the Biblical model of the family is the constitution of an extraordinarily resilient and flexible institution capable of acting in common (orders must be obeyed!) and endowed with the strength to offer lasting resistance to the totalitarian pretensions of the wider institutions of society, whether they be of a political or a religious character.

3. The roles and functions of the family

Having examined the origins of the family and its basic character or structure, let us now turn to its fundamental role, or rather to the numerous roles it is called to play. We must first note the extremely limited present function of the family in Western society. This model of the family, because of the political, economic and cultural domination of the West over the whole planet, exercises a powerful attraction for the families of the world. Now this Western model, when compared to the family as revealed in the teachings of the Bible (and to the widespread practise even of non Christian nations until a recent period), is a fundamentally truncated image of the true character of the family and of the potential achievements of this institution. The current Western model of the family – a temporary, fragile and unstructured grouping of atomised and equal individuals – has in fact very little to do with the family as revealed in the teachings of the Scriptures. This Western reductionist view of the family is a sociological and historical anomaly [9], a philosophical aberration, and is, from the point of view of the Historical Christian Faith, unquestionably heretical theologically. As such this model must be rejected if we are to begin solving the innumerable problems it has brought upon our civilisation.

a) The family as the basic unit of society

As is clearly witnessed by the Torah the family has a temporal priority over every other social institution. God created Adam first, then from Adam he made Eve and together they brought forth children into the world. All social institutions – religious, political, economic, cultural and whatever – have their root in this original family. This in itself justifies the purpose of this Congress and explains its motto :The natural family is the fundamental social unit.

But we must say more. With the diversification of society the functions once exclusively held by the family in the religious, political, economic and cultural fields have come to be delegated to larger institutions deemed better able to accomplish their function such as the State, the Church, Business organisations, Schools, etc. Many of these functions nonetheless still substantially belong to the fundamental vocation of the family. Delegating them out to other organisations is one thing. Abandoning the political, economic, educational and religious functions of the family to the State, to the Church, to Business organisations or to Schools constitutes the vocational betrayal of the family's true functions. The Western family has in fact given up almost all its divinely ordained functions to the Almighty State. It has thus become an empty shell, a temporary and insignificant assemblage of individuals, soon to be durably dispersed. These atomised individuals are, for all their pretension to personal liberty and autonomy, in fact totally dependant for their very existence on the functioning of our new Leviathan, the modern bureaucratic State. How far removed we are today from the social reality so pithily expressed by the English proverb : Every man's home is his castle. We will now examine what such a Biblical vision of the family represents.

b) The family as a miniature political order

The word government in the Biblical perspective does not first apply to the government of the State. Men and women must first know how to govern themselves before they can think of governing others. Husband and wife can then together seek to govern their household. Then comes the government of wider organisations such as the Church, the Business enterprise, and all kinds of voluntary associations. Only in the final resort can we speak of government as the government of the society at large. It is useful to remember that in the beginning (that is at the time of the creation of the world), the Biblical family constituted the first political order. By its very nature it represents an independent political society. It has a presiding authority in the person of the father ; a differentiated government in the form of the common direction of the family by the parents. Placed as they are under the supreme and overarching authority of God's Law those who govern the family establish the rules by which it functions. In this way the family exercises a legislative function. Further, within the bounds of the family the parents constitute a judicial authority which can, of its own prerogative, judge cases where the family's laws have been infringed. Finally, the family exercises clear police functions having the Biblical authority to punish acts contrary to the laws of its modest polity.

These are the privileges and duties which from a Biblical perspective constitute each family as an independent political order. Of course this political microcosm does not exist in a vacuum, independently of a wider political order, that of the State, itself placed under the overarching authority of God's Law. The exact meaning of the Word of God is defined by the magisterial teaching of the faithful Church. The State must, wherever necessary, punish whatever crimes are perpetrated within the political microcosm of the family. But the

intervention of such an external authority must be strictly limited to bona fide crimes and be always undertaken with prudence. For it is one of the functions of the State, as defined by the Bible, to see to the preservation of the independence of these miniature familial political orders. What we can today observe in the West is the persistent action of the secular (i.e. atheistic) State aimed at usurping these political functions of the family and thus reducing them to nothing. In my country, Switzerland, for example the paternal authority has been legally abolished in the name of a functional equality (even interchangeability) between husband and wife. Indeed the very names of «husband» and «wife» no longer appear in our federal matrimonial law. They have been replaced by that of «partner». In some European countries biblically sanctioned corporal punishment applied by parents on their own children can lead to their being sent to prison. We are now in the process of going one step further in the devaluation of the Biblical family by the proposition put forward by our authorities to institute a legal status for so-called «homosexual couples». This total moral and natural aberration has very recently passed into law in France, which in this followed the example of the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Iceland. It is very clear today that our «post-Christian» nations have lost all sense of the nature and purpose of the family. Non Christian nations are not in such an advanced state of intellectual, moral and social corruption. Amongst other things they still – but for how long ? – preserve a sense of the creational meaning of the family.

c) The family as a miniature economic order

The Biblical vision of the family also implies a high degree of autonomy on the economic level. The family is essentially conceived as an independent economic organism. Thus, from a Christian point of view, the basic economic unit of society is familial. In this sense all the members of the family have a decisive, if differentiated, role to play in the economic welfare of the whole. The father bears the brunt of the task of providing the material welfare of the family. Here he is helped by the highly varied activities of his wife – her work being principally related to homebuilding – but the children also, as they grow up, become ever more effective aids. Servants, and in certain societies slaves, are, from the Biblical point of view, to be considered as forming a part of the household and must in consequence be treated as such. Of course, on marriage the children leave their parents to constitute their own new independent families. But the lateral bonds between related families remain strong. These outgrowths of the original family constitute new political and economic organisms, functionally independent of the parents but not forgetful of their responsibilities towards them. This relative economic autarky of the family farm in Europe, for example, was until a recent period, a very common phenomenon. This was also true of the small artisan shop [11]. As a family we have experienced the effectiveness and power of such an independent family organism, particularly in the battle we have waged over the past twenty-five years for the defense of the traditional family in French speaking Switzerland. Without the constant help of my wife and children, all cheerfully working together in the framework of our Christian Parents' Association, much less would have been accomplished.

But this is not all. Such a highly functional view of the family implies a very positive attitude towards the birth of children. In the Biblical perspective the birth of a child is seen as a great blessing and the growth of the family perceived as growth in effective power. A well organised, hierarchical and disciplined family is indeed a very powerful organisation. That is

why the modern atheistic State is so determined to destroy it. Such a family is not only a highly productive institution but it also constitutes a basic and extremely efficient unit for the exercise of social welfare. In such a family the elderly parents are not cruelly excluded from a productive function in society by retirement at an arbitrary age but, as their strength weakens, gradually diminish their activities. The welfare of the parents in old age is assured, not by fragile and impersonal State pension schemes, today being destroyed by our declining birth rate, but by personal support provided by the existence of numerous children who understand what it means to honour father and mother. Within such a strong and flexible structure it is also easy to integrate into the household the unmarried members of the family. They can thus all – old and young, married and unmarried – play an important role in the multifarious facets of the life of the family. Such a family constitutes an organism whose resilience makes it able to support its members in situations of crisis, such as sickness, bereavement or loss of work. Such a flexible and strong social institution is a powerful bulwark against the totalitarian pretensions of the modern bureaucratic State.

d) The family as a cultural and educational organism

In the West it is considered normal for the family not be directly involved in the schooling of its children. This task is usually delegated to the State educational system. The Biblical teaching on this matter is very clear. This task is the duty of the parents who are accountable to God for the religious, moral, intellectual and practical education given to their children. If the parents may delegate this authority to organisations external to the family such as private schools who teach their children in a framework of belief they can approve, they nonetheless remain personally accountable for the education their children receive. The Christian Home School Movement which has grown so vigorously since its inception in the United States some twenty years ago and is today burgeoning in many countries has done much to restore this vital educational function to the family. The academic and educational results produced by this restoration of formal instruction to the family have been remarkable. But, in addition, the restoration of this function to the parents has had an exceptional effect on the very life, structure and cohesion of the families involved. The return of the parents to this aspect of an active obedience to the conditions of the Biblical covenant has brought with it great blessings. Not only are the children brought up in the Christian beliefs of their parents, but the parents themselves rediscover the great and unsuspected riches of the institution with which God has entrusted them. This path leads to the restoration of the family as the foundational institution of society and to the dethroning of the religious – in this case cultural and educational – pretensions of the State in its bloated unnatural domination of the living institutions of society. The return to such a path of obedience to God will no doubt lead to the building up of healthy social structures in our nations.

e) The family as a religious institution

It is clearly impossible to speak of The role of the family in Christianity without mentioning its religious role. As we have already pointed out the family is indestructible for as a creational institution it bears the image of the Heavenly Family, the Holy Trinity, One God in Three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In addition, we have seen that the loving authoritative and submissive relationship between husband and wife constitutes a living image of the relation which unites Jesus Christ to his Church, the Church being the harbinger of the new creation. In the Historic Christian perspective, whether Eastern

Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Evangelical or Reformed, the family is a Covenantal institution. The family is thus seen as an institution placed under the special protection of God. Since the end of the XVIIth Century this covenantal character of the family has in the West been replaced by the secular notion that the family is simply a contractual institution and, as such, dissolvable at will. This means that the vision of the family as a stable created form (like species in biology or the elements of chemistry) has been abandoned in favour of the notion that individuals (like the isolated atoms of Newtonian physics governed only by mathematical laws) can make (or unmake) the family at will. Thus the West has abandoned all sense of the sacred character of the family. This secularisation of the family is the fruit of the atheisation of Western thought. Today, with the legal recognition of so-called «homosexual marriages» we have gone a step further. We no longer even recognise the normativity of the natural character of the family.

As a religious institution the family has a temporal and practical (if not spiritual) priority over the Church. In the beginning, in the persons of our first parents, Adam and Eve, the family represented the Church. It is interesting to note that the first sacrifices, those of Cain and Abel, were offered in the context of the family. This is seen also with Noah at the time of the universal flood as well as in the sacrifices offered by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This state of affairs changed to some degree with the instauration of the ceremonies of the Mosaic Law and much later in the ecclesiastic form of worship practised in the Apostolic Church. We can observe in the Apostolic Church how the Biblical household often serves as the nucleus for the establishment of local Churches. But even today in the Christian family the father retains a spiritual authority which makes of him not only the political, judicial and economic leader of his social microcosm, but its religious head as well. We have seen that the Christian view of government is first personal ; then it is the government of the family by the parents ; finally we come to the political government of the nation. Likewise, the relation of the Christian to God is first intimately personal ; then it is exercised in the wider context of family worship ; finally it is formally ecclesiastical. We have gradually discovered to what extent from the Christian perspective The natural family is the fundamental social unit. We find now that this is equally true in the religious sphere. For if the family is disordered spiritually, then the wider religious community will manifest very similar disorders. Such religious disorders will very soon cause serious damage to the society at large.

Conclusion

It is time to conclude our rapid survey of The role of the family in Christianity. What I have briefly tried to evoke before you is clearly not a sociological description of the present state of the family in what is left today of a formerly vital, creative and beneficent Christendom. The picture I have endeavoured to draw before you is that of a model to be imitated, model that all who wish to see the restoration of the family must seek to put into practise. This purpose is nothing less than the actualisation of that original model of the family established for all men at the creation. This model is deformed by our sin, our willful disobedience to God's Holy Law as it is revealed in the Torah, indeed in all the commandments contained in the Tanak and in the Apostolic Witness. It is what still persists of this model in our nations which the powers behind the atheistic (and pantheistic) utopian globalism everywhere dominant today seek utterly to remove from the face of the earth. But the present worldwide assault on the family – a cultural, political, economic and spiritual war to which this Congress provides ample witness – must first

be seen as a sure sign of God's Holy displeasure with the present condition of mankind. Because of the tremendous growth of evil in the world, God, in faithfulness to his covenantal judgements on stubborn perseverance in sin consigned in his Covenant with men, is today clearly (particularly in our apostate West) withdrawing his protective hand from the families and the nations of the earth. We must confess that this divine judgement on the families of the world strikes first and foremost, and most severely, at our Christian nations – the nations of an impious, immoral and apostate Christendom. As always, God's judgement can be turned aside, but only by the true and sincere repentance of men from their evil ways and by their return to the worship and obedience due to the only true God. The path of our deliverance is revealed in the divinely inspired Scriptures of the Tanak and the Apostolic Witness, and publicly manifested in the Person of His Son, the Messiah of Israëel, our Lord Jesus-Christ.

The covenant established in the beginning with our first parents, Adam and Eve, was broken by their willful disobedience. But God, in his mercy and longsuffering patience, through the history of the patriarchs before the Flood and with the descendants of Abraham after, worked towards the reestablishment of his Covenant with men. And to this work of redemption, redemption which includes the deliverance of the family from all its enemies, the Christian family must bear a clear witness. This covenant established with Adam and renewed in Noah and Abraham, Moses and David, was finally, fully and definitively established through the incarnation, the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus-Christ. It is only through the humble return of all men to the witness of this immemorial covenant that we can hope to see the total defeat of those evil powers which, in their constant ambition to usurp the throne of God, manifest their hatred of the divine family through their efforts utterly to destroy its image, the human family. In such dangerous times we draw our comfort and our hope from the words of the prophet Isaiah so faithfully consigned for us all in the Tanak of Israëel :

According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies ; to the islands he will repay recompense. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the West, and his glory from the rising sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. And the redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord : My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. (Isaiah 59 : 19-21)

Islam and the family

Importance of a Family Code

□ A sensible and well-balanced family system is the very foundation of a happy life. Indeed, it is the root of an advancing civilization. Religion comes to take human beings nearer to Allah. Therefore, it must create an atmosphere conducive to that ideal; otherwise, it cannot achieve its goal. No religion can be regarded as complete unless it has a well-defined code of family life which expressly shows the exact responsibility and role of each member of the family. The family is a closely-knit unit of human society; and this nearness creates eminent danger of friction and conflict unless every member is told in unambiguous terms what his duties and rights are. □ □ If a religion shuts its eyes to the intricacies of family problems, its followers,

sooner or later, will revolt against it, destroying all religious tenets in the wake of that rebellion. The reason is simple; the prevalent environment and social system would not be in harmony with that religion; and the influence of inharmonious society would gradually push them further and further from that religion. Finally a time would come when the religion would have no more than a ceremonial function with little or no effect on life. □ □ A good example would be Christianity which ignored the claims of human nature, extolling the idea of celibacy. Many zealous people tried to live up to that ideal, Monks and nuns shut themselves in monasteries. For a short period, this scheme worked well. Then the nature took its revenge; the monks and abbots cultivated the idea that they were representatives of Christ, and the nuns were given the title of “brides of Christ.” So with easy conscience they turned the monasteries into centres of sexual liberties. □ □ Nature can be compared to a steel spring which when pressed down jumps back with equal force. When it took its revenge upon Christians, it turned the Christians societies into the most per-missive, libertine and undisciplined ones the world had ever seen. □ □ This happens when a religion does not conform with nature and when the leaders of religion think that it is quite enough to say ‘Love thy neighbour’ without telling them how. □ □

Islam and the Family System

□ Islam is the Final religion and has the most ideal shari `ah (revealed law). An unbiased observer cannot help admiring the equilibrium which it has achieved balancing the demands of body and spirit, providing guidance concerning life in this world as well as teachings concerning life in the hereafter. □ □ It is the Leading Light which brightly illuminates every turning in the highway of human life. It is the Perfect shari `ah which did not leave any human need uncared for. □ □ In so far as family-life goes, we see that Islam has unravelled every problem of the family system with such dexterity that one has to accept that it could not be solved in a better way. □ □ One cannot but register astonishment at the attitude adopted by some Christians writers. They seem to be suffering from an inferiority complex when they compare the Islamic shari `ah with their religion which has no shari `ah at all. Therefore, they try to imply that, that perfection of shari `ah is a “drawback” or that the moral standard of Islamic teachings is not as high as that of Christianity.

Family Pillars

□ In any family there are those persons without whom a family cannot be regarded as complete. A human being is born of a father and a mother; the parents look after the child and bring it up. This child in turn attains maturity and is joined to a spouse in the golden link of matrimony. Then this couple start their own family. Thus we may say that the persons who form pillars of the family are father, mother, child, husband and wife. □ □ Some people need help in their domestic chores. Therefore, Islam has added the ‘servant’ also in the list. □

Joint Family and Separate Family Systems

□ According to sociologists, there are two types of family systems in the world: “The Joint Family System” and “The Separate Family System”. □ □ Joint Family System: This system implies that all members of a clan:- father, son, brother, sister, uncle, nephew etc., live together. The income of the individual is not treated as his personal property, rather it belongs to the family and the expenses of all members are met by that ‘family income.’ □ □ Separate Family

System: In this system every-one is responsible for his own immediate dependants. His income belongs to him and not to the family. □ □The Hindu family is a joint family while in Arabia the separate family system prevails. Perhaps it is for this reason that cousins are called 'brothers' and 'sisters' in India, while in Arabia they are just sons and daughters of the uncle or aunt. □ □And, perhaps it was because of this system that Hindus regard cousins as falling within the prohibited degrees, that is, cousins may not marry each other in the Hindu religion. There is no such prohibition in Islam. □ □However, both these systems are very old, and each has its advantages and disadvantages.

Joint Family System: its Advantages and Disadvantages

□The Joint Family System is a very good ex-ample of humanism, benevolence, mutual trust and co-operation. □ □Members of a family or clan are branches of the same root. It is only natural that they should remain united in their domestic management and family life. This 'togetherness' is expected to create happiness and peace of mind. □ □Furthermore, this system ensures that those family members who, for any reason, are unable to earn their livelihood do not face destitution and poverty, and thus are spared disgrace and heartaches. This system acts like an Insurance company, which accepts all responsibilities at the time of old age, unemployment and sickness, and the family members are saved from the troubling anxiety of tomorrow. □ □So much about its advantages. Ironically, these very advantages give rise to its disadvantages. The ease of mind provided by this system some times can be misused by some unscrupulous people. If a member of the family is lazy, he finds it easy enough to live on the fruits of others' labour; he never realizes the importance of earning his own livelihood. Once he acquires such taste, he will find many excuses to avoid work. After all, why should he exert himself when there are other relatives ready to take his burden on their shoulders? □ □Unless one is made to realize that one cannot exploit others in this way, one will not make real effort to earn his bread. Neither will he feel ashamed of his useless life. □ □Furthermore, this system kills the initiative to work harder. If a man exerts himself to the furthest limit and thus earns more, his standard of living, naturally, would be much higher than a person earning less. If a man earns twice as much as his brother, common sense says that their standards of living must be different accordingly. But the Joint Family System does not allow it. And the drive to exert oneself more, and to earn more, dies. □ □The most serious defect of this system is that, instead of creating harmony, love and trust in the family (as it is supposed to do), it becomes the chief cause of domestic strife. When a man works hard to meet the expenses of the Joint Family while his brother spends his time in roaming the streets aimlessly; or when he exerts himself to earn as much money as possible, while the brother throws away his chances of advancement, the resulting ugliness in the family relations is beyond description. Family members begin hating each other, tempers flare on the slightest pretext; suspicion, anger and hatred fill the place of trust, love and happiness. The atmosphere of the house gradually turns into a living hell and then comes a time when separation remains the only remedy. □ □

Separate Family System: its Advantages and Disadvantages

□The Separate Family System does not suffer from the disadvantages mentioned above of Joint Family System, nor does it have its advantages. □ □To remain aloof from one's own relatives is likely to kill the finest of human instincts. This system may breed selfishness and meanness. Those who look upon mankind as if raised on a high pedestal feel that the whole of mankind is

akin to the limbs of one body - humanity; but the Separate Family System turns brothers into strangers, who may meet several times a day but do not care for one another.

The Wise System of Islamic Society

Now, let us look at the wise system of Islam. Here we find that Islam has laid down a straight-forward highway with such skill that a man walking on it may enjoy the sweet smell of both these systems, and still not be beset by the thorny problems of either. How? □ □ Islam removed the basic cause of lethargy by decreeing that everyone is responsible for the expenses of his own dependants: he has no right to put the burden of his children, for example, on the shoulders of other relatives. Thus, the evil effects of the Joint Family System were avoided; at the same time, everyone was emphatically enjoined to “keep the bond of relationship intact.” This prevented the tendency to selfishness and aloofness from one’s own flesh and blood. □

Dependants

□ In principle, the dependants (whose responsibility must be borne in any case) was limited.

Al-Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.)¹ said: □ The ways to spend (one’s) wealth are twenty-four in all . . . Thus, the five ways in which spending money is obligatory (wajib) are the expenses of the maintenance of his dependants, of his children, his father and mother, his wife and his slave. These are obligatory upon him whether he be hard-up or affluent. □ □ But if he is affluent and well-to-do, then he has been emphatically enjoined to spend on other relatives also. The same hadith (tradition) goes on to say: □ And the five strongly recommended expenses are: Dedication of perpetual gift, doing good to one’s relatives, doing good to other believers, recommended charity and emancipation of slaves.

This hadith is narrated in Wasa'ilash-Shi`ah. There are numerous ahadith (traditions) extolling the virtues of doing good to one’s relatives, which will be mentioned in appropriate chapters. □ □ An interesting point to ponder over is that the Hindus, in spite of their Joint Family System (or should it be said, `because of it?') never felt such intense love towards their relatives as was seen in the Arabs in spite of their Separate Family System, and that Islam upheld that love to a reasonable extent. □ □ One cannot help but admire how Islam has interwoven the “family sympathy” of the Joint Family System with the “legal orderliness” of the Separate Family System. There is no escape from admitting that such a beautiful as well as perfect family system was never adopted before Islam. □ □ After all, what is the use of a joint family in which two Hindus (even if they are father and son) are not allowed by their religious customs to eat together? And what is the harm of a separate family if the people are encouraged to eat in one another’s house and thus strengthen the bonds of love and relationship?

Seclusion of Women

Islamic civilization, which is based upon the principle that women should not mingle with men, emphasizes separate domestic arrangements. With the influence of Hindu culture, Indian Muslims gradually adopted the Joint Family System. As a result, that very important Islamic principle has been sacrificed and it has, in its wake, disturbed many other important aspects of Islamic society. The following ayah (verse) needs careful study: □

And say to the believing women that they should lower their eyes and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, or their fathers, or their husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons or their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women or those whom their right hands possess, or those male servants who are free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the hidden things of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O' ye believers! turn ye all together towards Allah, that ye may attain bliss. (Qur'an, 24: 31) □ □ This list does not include the husband's brothers nor his nephews.

A Muslim woman must, therefore, keep aloof from them as well as from other strangers. □ □ But the Joint Family System does not allow adherence to this important rule. And once a Muslim woman shows her beauty to the brother or nephew of her husband, she has broken out of the secure boundary of the Islamic commandment, and once the limit is crossed, there is no saying where this "showing off" will end, or whether it will end at all. □ □ Another ayah in the same surah clearly shows that one should not put the burden of his domestic arrangement even on one's parents forever, one must be self-reliant and self-supporting. The ayah is as follows □ □ There is no blame upon . . . yourselves that ye eat (without asking permission) in your own houses or the houses of your fathers, or houses of your mothers, or the houses of your brothers, or the houses of your sisters, or the houses of your fathers' brothers, or the houses of your fathers' sisters, or the houses of your mothers' brothers or the houses of your mothers' sisters, or in houses of which the keys are in your possession, or in the house of a friend of yours . . . (Qur'an, 24: 61) □ □ The ayah clearly mentions separate 'houses' for fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts, etc. It shows that there is a difference, in the eyes of Islam, between 'your house' and the 'houses of your fathers' and 'houses of your brothers', for example □ □ The harmony and unity which must be created by following this law is self-evident. Eating in one another's houses is the surest way of creating love and friendship. □ □

Question: There was a Separate Family System in Arabia. Was it not because of this that the Qur'an mentioned separate 'houses' for each relative ? □ □ Answer: Islam had not come to follow the Arabs or anybody else. It had come to lead the whole mankind including the Arabs. There were hundreds of customs - good and bad - in Arabia at the advent of Islam. Islam eradicated all evil and defective customs and rites, and allowed only those systems to continue which were desirable from its own point of view. □ □ If Islam had not liked the family system of the Arabs, it could easily have changed it. But instead, the Qur'an mentions that system without any hint of objection, thus endorsing it. □ □ We find many examples in the lives of the Holy Prophet and his Ahlu'l-bayt (family members) which prove that they had adopted Separate Family System in their lives. □ □ There was famine in Mecca in 35 Amu'l fil (the year of the Elephant). Abu Talib had many children and his means of livelihood were limited. The Holy Prophet felt that Abu Talib was facing difficulties. He suggested to `Abbas (another of his uncles), who was wealthy, to share the burden of Abu Talib. `Abbas went with the Holy Prophet to Abu Talib and it was decided that `Ali should live with the Holy Prophet, Ja'far with `Abbas and `Aqil was to remain with Abu Talib. □ □ This fact proves that the domestic arrangement of the Holy Prophet was separate from that of Abu Talib. There is no need to remind the readers that the relationship between Abu Talib and the Holy Prophet was more tender and loving than is between a father

and his son. □ □ This event, while confirming the Separate Family System, clearly shows the other aspect of Islamic family code: “Keeping the bonds of relationship strong.” □ □ During the last Ramadan of his life, Amir al-mu'minin, `Ali ibn AbiTalib (a.s.) used to break his fast one day at the house of al-Imam al-Hasan (a.s.), next day at the house of al-Imam al-Husayn (a. s.), the third day at the house of `Abdullah ibn Ja'far, his son-in-law. □ □ This fact, again, shows both aspects of the Islamic code: Separate Family arrangements and “keeping the Bonds of Relationship strong.” □ □ These two examples are sufficient to guide Muslims in their daily life. If any Muslim ventures to deviate from this straight path, he will no longer remain on the path of Islam. □ □ In short, Islam has brought for mankind a Family System which combines the good features of both family systems mentioned earlier and has weeded out the evil aspects of both. It has the legal straight-forwardness of the Separate Family System as well as the harmony and sympathy of the Joint Family System. □ □ And it is only by following this Islamic code that mankind can obtain peace of mind in this life and everlasting happiness in the life hereafter.

Hinduism and Family

The Hindu view of caste, ashramas, and family are inseparable—every person is born into a family belonging to a particular caste, and passes through the four stages of life by practicing dharma appropriate to each stage of life.

Among the four ashramas, the second stage of the married householder is central because it births and sustains the three other ashramas. When a man marries, he pays the three debts he owes to the ancestors, the gods, and his teacher (guru). To the ancestors, a married man pays his debt by having children, especially a male child, to continue the family lineage. Since the surname of the average Hindu is usually the family name, when a son is born the family name continues. This is not the case with daughters, who marry into another family and take up the surname of their husbands. Continuing the family lineage and its name is crucial because the memories and integrity of the ancestors are kept alive through these. The name (specifically surname) of a family is often synonymous with integrity and respect. Maintaining family integrity is necessary because it reflects the extent to which family members are faithful to their dharma. When a son marries a woman from a reputable family, earns a living through a just and honest vocation, and provides for his family, he honors the ancestors. Furthermore, because dharma is inclusive of religious traditions and practices relating to moksha, when a man imparts family dharma to his children, he enables their salvation and that of generations to come.

As a householder, a man pays back debts owed to the gods, the providers of prosperity and comfort, by offering appropriate sacrifices and prayers to them. Giving alms to the poor and religious mendicants, and occasionally feeding Brahmins and financially remunerating them for their services, are also deemed as acts symbolizing gratitude to the gods for material benefits enjoyed by a family. A man pays back debts owed to his guru by transmitting knowledge and wisdom received from the guru to his children. However, in the cities and towns of India, and in some villages, the average child rarely studies under a guru. In these contexts, a Western school system is the common mode of education. Furthermore, girls are equal recipients of education in cities and major towns. Urban Indian women who receive a Western form of education hold professional jobs just like their Western counterparts. Many of these women also contribute

substantially to household income and have an equal voice in family decisions.

For Hindus, a family is larger than the nuclear family; family includes the extended family—maternal and paternal grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. In India, especially in towns and villages still untouched by a free-market economic structure and modern culture that dominates the cities, many people are born into a joint family system. A joint family basically comprises paternal parents, their sons, daughters-in-law, unmarried daughters, and grandchildren. Here, the oldest male is the head of the entire household. Respect for a family member is based on age because the older a person, the wiser he or she is about family dharma. The older men make the financial decisions, and the older women are often informally consulted. In instances where a joint family does not exist, older members are still consulted before important decisions are made, especially in relation to marriage. Among Hindus, the family is the ideal environment through which Hindu dharma is passed from one generation to another—a child begins learning about religious traditions, epic stories, ethics, norms, and values, especially by the example set by family members.

When a person marries in the context of a Hindu family, he or she may literally wed an individual, but on a broader level a person marries into a family. Because a family is the embodiment of dharma, a prospective bride is considered a candidate only when the traditions, practices, and economic status of her family match that of the prospective bridegroom's family. Most Hindu marriages are arranged—relatives and friends suggest the name and family of prospective brides or bridegrooms. Before a family considers a person as a candidate for their son or daughter, the family Brahmin is consulted to examine the horoscopes of the two individuals concerned, and to suggest whether there is a possible match. In a rural setting, after the approval of the family Brahmin, the decision regarding marriage is almost always made by the parents and the extended family of the people involved. In this context, very rarely are the prospective bride or groom's opinions considered. If this process does not result in a wedding, the family search for a bride and bridegroom continues until two families agree that their son and daughter would make a good couple. Among middle class families in Indian cities, depending on the level of conservatism, the man and woman may be allowed to meet alone on one or a number of occasions before a marriage decision is made. Since the 1990s, with the increase of the influence of Western culture, many young men and women in major Indian cities find a prospective bride or bridegroom through the process of a friendship or dating, and then inform their parents of their mutual attraction. However, in the final decision, the families of the man and woman are definitely involved. Unlike in the West, a man and a woman do not get engaged and then inform their families of the "good news."

5.5. *Show how Jesus by his words and his behaviour, taught that obedience to the Kingdom of God must be valued above loyalty to one's family.*

Below are scriptures teaching the primacy of the kingdom of God over one's family:

Matthew 12:46-50

While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. 47 Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to

“speak to you.”

48 He replied to him, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” 49 Pointing to his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers. 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

Matthew 19: 28-30

Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife[e] or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.

Luke 14:25-27

Large crowds were travelling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 26 “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. 27 And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

5.6. Show how Jesus by his actions and his teachings sought to strengthen family life.

Matthew 19:1-11

When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan. 2 Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

3 Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?”

4 “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

7 “Why then,” they asked, “did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?”

8 Jesus replied, “Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. 9 I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery.”

10 The disciples said to him, “If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry.”

11 Jesus replied, “Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given. 12 For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others—and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it.”

Jesus' life and teachings challenge so many of our assumptions. For example, he challenges our notions of respectability. He was open and welcoming to the outcasts and sinners and unrespectable people. He had harsh words for those in the most prestigious positions of religious and political leadership—calling the Pharisees “white-washed tombs” and King Herod “that fox.”

Jesus challenges our notions of power. He was confessed to be the Messiah, the Jewish savior who had come to set things right. But rather than leading a violent revolution, he suffered. He accepted a scandalous death of the most humiliating type—crucifixion as a criminal.

Jesus also challenges our notions of family loyalty. This is an especially uncomfortable challenge in this day of hand-wringing about the breakdown of “family values” in our culture. Jesus taught that one must hate one's father and mother if they come between one and genuine discipleship (Luke 14:26).

In Mark 3:31-35, Jesus asked a rhetorical question, “Who are my mother and my brothers?”—and this at a time when his actual mother and brothers had come for him. He answered this by saying that it is those that do God's will who are his family—not necessarily his mother and brothers of the flesh at all.

To understand more fully what this instance is all about, we must look at its context. The third chapter of Mark's Gospel tells of the early days of Jesus' ministry. The kingdom of God is at hand with Jesus. A new day has dawned, a new day of openness and healing, justice and reconciliation.

As part of this new day, Jesus calls into being a new community of faith, a community of people committed to following God's will. He chooses the core of this community, the twelve disciples, in Mark 3:13-19.

Then Jesus and his core followers head to Jesus' hometown of Nazareth. Here we see an unfortunate conflict. The very people who should have best understood and most joyfully welcomed this new expression of God's saving involvement in human history don't understand. The religious leaders don't deny that Jesus has power, but they argue that this is due not to God's power but to Satan's.

Jesus is misunderstood by his own family as well. We are told that when his family hears of what he is doing, they go to “restrain him” (or, perhaps more accurately, to seize him by force—the same term is used twice later by Mark in describing Jesus' arrests). They feared for his sanity—“People were saying, ‘He has gone out of his mind’” (Mark 3:21).

Jesus responds to the slander of the religious leaders with his enigmatic statement, “Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” (3:29). From the context, it appears likely that what he meant was that when you attribute the things of God to Satan, you are so blind that you can never know God's mercy as mercy. You will keep mistakenly seeing it as of the devil, mislabeling good as evil, and missing out altogether on God's mercy.

Then Jesus' mother and brothers return, apparently trying again to take him away and straighten him out. When Jesus is told that they have come, he asks rhetorically, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" (3:33). Jesus looks at those who are with him, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother" (3:34-35).

These words of Jesus are disconcerting. In some ways they are troubling. In other ways they are radically inclusive and liberating.

How are these words troubling? They seem to go directly counter to the teaching of the Law. The fifth commandment speaks clearly: "Honor your father and your mother" (Exod. 20:12). So, too, do the frightening words of Deut. 21:18-21: "If someone has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father and mother, who does not heed them when they discipline him, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his town at the gate of that place. They shall say to the elders of his town, 'this son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of the town shall stone him to death."

Was Jesus refusing to "honor" his mother? Was he a "stubborn and rebellious" son? There may be evidence for arguing that he was. However, I believe he was simply following his own sense of calling—and this led him to refuse to defer to his mother's wishes for him. He was, to some extent at least, acting contrary to the traditional ideal of unquestioning obedience and deference to parental authority and family ties. He operated according to a different scale of values. He placed faithfulness to God above any other commitment.

Here is also where Jesus' words can be understood to be radically inclusive and liberating. Jesus, it appears, is basically affirming that what matters in God's kingdom is a person's faith, a person's commitment to follow God's will, a person's openness to God's mercy.

In other words, faith matters much more than birthright, than family ties, than ethnicity, than inherited pedigree. This is the type of openness which the apostle Paul reflects in his famous words from Gal. 3:28: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

Jesus is totally redefining family in terms of faith. Membership in God's family is open to all, equally, without discrimination—based only on a willingness to do God's will. This undercuts any practices in the community of faith that discriminate on the basis of gender, race, social class, age, or any other of our human lines of insider-outsider distinction.

5.7. Illustrate the teaching of the New Testament that the Christian community is the most important family for Christians.

Romans 12:10-12: Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but

keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Romans 12:16:Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Romans 12:18:18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay,"[d] says the Lord.

Romans 14:13:Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

Romans 15:7:Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Romans 15:14:I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

1 Corinthians 1:10:I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,[a] in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.

1 Corinthians 3:4:For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere human beings?

1 Corinthians 6:6:But instead, one brother takes another to court—and this in front of unbelievers!

2 Corinthians 13:11-12:Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

Galatians 5:13:You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 15 If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

Ephesians 4:2: Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:32:Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you

Ephesians 5:19: speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 2:5: In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Colossians 3:13: Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:16: Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

These and other scriptures emphasise the importance of the Christian community as the family of God.

5.8. State the teachings of Jesus about marriage and divorce and compare them with Old Testament teachings and the teachings of Jesus' contemporaries.

Matthew 5:31-32

"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' 32 But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Jesus did not extensively speak about marriage, however, there many other passages in the New Testament that talk about marriage that Jesus would not reject.

The Biblical definition of a Christian Marriage is given in Gen.2:24. It states, "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." Christian Marriage is exclusive ('a man ...his wife...'), publicly acknowledged ('leaves his parents'), permanent ('cleaves to his wife') and consummated by sexual intercourse ('becomes one flesh').

A man ... his wife

God created only one wife for Adam and the Lord Jesus showed in Mt.19:4-6 the monogamous principle of Gen.2:24 that "the two persons joined together to be one". While it is true that marriage is not permanent in the sense of eternity, being only temporal and earthly, yet marriage is permanent as long as life lasts or "till death us do part".

The companionship, mutual help and comfort that a husband and wife find and experience in married life is therefore not momentary but for their whole life till death separates them. Christian Marriage demands faithfulness on the part of both husband and wife. This is seen in the Marriage Covenant of Mal.2:14.

Leaves his parents

It is not necessarily talking of a physical leaving but of a relationship where the husband puts his wife first. Gerard Von Rad points out that Gen.2:24 is not a process of marriage but "a concluding, summarizing word of the narrator, a short epilogue" (A Commentary: SCM, London:1972:83) which explains, as Westermann puts it, "the elemental power of love between a man and woman, which is independent of any existing institution" (Genesis: A Practical Commentary, Eerdmans: 1987:2). In other words, it refers to not just a physical leaving but to an emotional and psychological leaving of parents and in the priority of the relationship to the spouse before any other parental, sibling or familial relationship (Pothan, Unpacking the Family, Grove Books: 1992:14-15).

Cleaves to his wife

Cleaving is a closer relationship than just physical love; it is about husband and wife cherishing each other. The word "cherish" is an old English word that is defined in the dictionary "to protect or tend lovingly, to keep in one's heart, to cling to." It defines the total loving companionship where the other's interest are more important than one's own as given in Phil.2:4.

How do we see a cleaving relationship put into practice? We should read Eph.5:21-33. The aim is "mutual submission" to one another as given in vs.21. The Wife is meant to submit to her husband as part of her "Christian servanthood" relationship. Her obedience is not servility but loving voluntary submission. The wife in her submission to her husband glorifies God (1Pet.3:1-2). The Husband is meant to love his wife with a sacrificial love. The Greek word used for "love" in vs.25 is "agape" which represents God's or Christ's love (Jn.3:16) and is therefore sacrificial love where the husband should be ready to die for his wife as given in vs.25-29. The summary of the marital relationships between the husband and wife is in vs.33 "however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband."

Becomes One flesh

The aim of Christian Marriage is to become "one flesh." This involves both the leaving and the cleaving to one another. "One Flesh" talks of unity, equality and oneness in every way - mentally, physically, spiritually and psychologically.

The husband is to protect his wife and comfort in all ways, since she is "the weaker sex" (1Pet.3:7). The word "weaker" is not used in any derogative sense but since she is more delicate. The husband must understand his wife's constitution and protect her accordingly. Protection is not only in the physical area but also in the mental and spiritual areas. The husband as the "spiritual head" of the family (1Cor.11:3) has the duty to help and guide his wife in spiritual matters. Where was Adam when the serpent was tempting his wife (Gen.3:1-2)? This means that he does not neglect his wife but gives her full and total companionship so that he can truly love, cherish and protect her.

Marriage should be according to God's holy law as seen in the Scriptures. It is therefore necessary for the couple to read the Bible and pray together daily. The saying "the Family that prays together stays together" is very true!

Marriage is a life long bond between a man and a woman based on mutual concern, love and sex. The Biblical concept of marriage is grounded in Gen.2:23-24 - "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." The two phrases 'leave' and 'one flesh' is central to the biblical significance of marriage.

"First, the term 'zb' means, "to leave" or "be distant". The traditional translation "leave" suggests that the man moves from his parents and sets up home elsewhere. In fact Israelites marriage the man continued to live in or near his parents home. It was the wife who left home to join her husband. Although the father and mother give a man his very life out of themselves, and although a man's early emotional attachment is to his parents, a married man's primary loyalty is to be directed elsewhere. Here in, a man is to leave his father and his mother. □□The term 'basar' is used for one flesh. It means "flesh", "meat" and "food". The meaning of 'one flesh' in marriage is 'a man and woman together into a fully shared life'. This is 'one flesh' union, overriding even blood relationships (his father and his mother) to create a new kinship. Marriage is the most profound bond that exists between two human beings; within it nothing can be withheld. The married man is to cling to his wife. This is the positive compliment of leaving his parents. The language suggests a profound union of husband with wife, so that his primary identification in all of life is with her. The outcome is that the man and woman become 'one flesh'. □□Thus Genesis 2 teaches that God instituted marriage when he made the first woman out of the flesh of the first man, so that the bond of marriage reunites man and woman as 'one flesh'. 'One flesh' entails a life long, exclusive clinging of one man to one woman in one life fully shared. □□Marriage is a mystery □□In Eph.5:22-33 Paul identifies the institution of marriage as a 'mystery' revealing Jesus Christ and the church. Throughout his instructions to wives (vv.22-24) and to husbands (vv.25-30), he draws parallels between the Christian marriage of a man and a woman and the ultimate marriage of Christ and his church. It follows that the betrothal of the church to Christ (2 Cor.11:1-3),and the union of the believer with Christ (1 Cor.6:16-17), are not mere metaphors. They are reality to which Christian marriage points, when it demonstrates the beauty described in Eph.5. Paul affirms that marriage is good, but also that the greatest human allegiance is to Christ himself (1 Cor.7:27-38). □□Paul's statement is that a man should love his wife as he loves his own body (Eph. 5:28). This might be misunderstood as allowing basic self-interest. He excludes this interpretation by pointing to Christ's love for his body, the church (vv 29b-30), love which took him to the cross (v.25). But Paul's declaration in verse 30 that 'we are members of (Christ's) body' gives him the opportunity to show a typology connection with Genesis 2:24 ('one flesh') in verse 31. His logic is striking. 'We are members of (Christ's) body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh" (vv.30-31). Christ's union with the church as his body is the reason why a man should become one flesh with his wife. So, the privilege of a Christian married couple is to declare the 'great mystery' (v.32) by incarnating in their marriage sacrificial divine love wedded to joyful human reverence (v.33). □□Marriage is honorable □□It is also clear from Eph.5:22-33 that Paul's view of the marriage relationship is extremely high. The OT prophets had magnificently and boldly described the covenantal union between God and Israel in terms of marriage (Ezek 31:32), thus herald the sacredness and honorableness of marriage. In this same tradition Paul proclaims the sacredness and honorableness of marriage of bodily using the marriage bond between husband and wife as an analogy of the bond that has been forged between Christ and the believing community. It is a profound mystery, "but I am talking about Christ and the church" (Eph 5:32). Of all human institutions that existed at that time, he selected

the institution of marriage is to illustrate the relationship between the believing community and the Lord. Because Paul held marriage in high esteem as the perfect example of “oneness” forged between two by the unifying power of love.

Marriage is a covenant

The word covenant derived from Latin word ‘foedus’ the root word ‘fidus’ the verb ‘fiere’, which means to trust, to have faith in, to entrust oneself to another, a covenant is seen as a relationship of mutual trust and fidelity (fides). Fidelity is of the essence of covenant. Palmer says in his article that a covenant itself is a solemn agreement between nations, peoples, or individuals, affecting a relationship that is binding and inviolable. Covenants have God as witness, but not in the sense that God simply vouch for the correctness of the agreement; they act as guarantors that the terms of the treaty, alliance, or covenant will be carried out. Oath, vow sacred commitments are covenant words. Covenants are not broken; they are violated when there is a breach of faith on the part if either or both of the covenanters. Covenant is expressed in terms of Marriage: a covenant of steadfast love, of love and fidelity. □□In history of Israel Yahweh is husband to Israel. Time and again Israel proves faithless to the terms of the covenant, but Yahweh will remain faithful (Isa.54:5-8). Yahweh is ready to set aside His righteous anger, to offer pardon on repentance, and through a new covenant more perfect than the first to accept Israel once again (Hos.2:17-20) for God hates divorce (Mal.2:16). □□Jesus does not use the term “covenant” of the marriage. Jesus taught that human couple is one-flesh and ‘what therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder (Mt.19:6) God is not only the witness or guarantor of marriage. He overrode the permissive Law of Moses divorce and remarriage. So I think Jesus also stressed that Marriage as a covenant and it should not be broken. □□Paul develops the theme of Christ’s redemptive love for His bride the church and the loving mutual submission of the couple, as the exemplar for the Christian husband and wife. Paul presents the marriage of two believers as reflection of Christ’s covenant of redemptive love and fidelity with the church and as a sign or sacrament of that covenant. It seems, In Paul’s writing that women should be submissive to man, but the real meaning is that both should be submissive to each other with mutual love. □□Marriage is instituted by God. It is an honorable and inviolable covenant. It is important that the pastor has to sit with the couple, either individually or together before marriage and after marriage to teach about the Biblical concept of marriage.

The family is a multi functional group that satisfies the basic physical, mental and spiritual needs of a human being. The human ideals, values and qualities such as love, commitment or sacrifice and cooperation are nurtured in the family. Marriage is a permanent, life-long and sacred union.

The word ‘divorce’ in English is derived from the Latin word ‘divortium’, which again is derived from ‘dis’, which means ‘to turn’. Divorce is the dissolution of the tie of marriage. Divorce can result of varied reasons, e.g. extramarital relations, impotency, barrenness, desertion, lunacy, etc. □□Old Testament □□‘If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house ...’ (Deut.24:1). □□The verse here does not command divorce rather assumes that divorce has taken place. The reason for divorce is that the wife has become displeasing to the husband, as he has found ‘something objectionable’ about her. In the Old Testament times, the term ‘something objectionable’ could include many things such as

conversing with men, loosening hair in public, deliberate transgression of the law, etc. □□The giving of a certificate of divorce implies not only a legal permission for divorce but also the legal permission for the women to remarry. The legislation of Deuteronomy, however, provided the same protection to the wife. This passage required the husband to provide the wife with a bill of divorcement, whereby she could not be viewed as an immoral woman.

New Testament

‘Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning. I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery." (Mt.19:3-9).

There were two schools of rabbinical thoughts on what ‘something objectionable’ could mean in Deut.24:1. The Hillel school interpreted it as ‘kata pasanaitian’, which can be taken as ‘for every reason and whatever’. The school of Shammai demands a serious fault in the wife in order to permit divorce. The Pharisees wanted to know what Jesus’ position was - whether he stood with Hillel or Shammai. In reply Jesus quotes Gen.1:27 and Gen.2:24. These two OT passages were familiar to the Pharisees. But by quoting these two, Jesus affirms the indissolubility of marriage that was an ongoing process from the beginning. In the creation story though Adam named all the creatures God had made, he could not find an appropriate companion. Then God made Eve and evaluating Adam and Eve, God said ‘very good’. So it was a divine plan that the two become one. Jesus’ reply shows that divorce has no place at all in God’s plan of marital relationship. What is ‘joined together’ by God should not be separated by anyone at all.

For the Pharisees, all that was required for divorce was that one should observe the legal formalities of putting it in writing. So they questioned Jesus as to why Moses had permitted a man to give a certificate of divorce. From Jesus’ reply, it is clear that Moses did not allow divorce; divorce was a concession that has no part in God’s original purpose. From Mt.19:9, it appears that there is room for divorce only in the exceptional case of ‘unchastity’ (Greek: ‘porneia’ meaning unlawful sexual conduct). This is different from the Greek word ‘moicheas’ used for adultery (Mt 5:27, 15:19, 19:18). Jesus made it clear that because of the hard hearts of the people, Moses had allowed them divorce. Here Jesus reaffirms the indissolubility of marriage, which is found in the creation narrative. □□Theology and Application: □□The church is placed in the society and therefore it has a constructive role to play on the social structures in order to bring about the fulfillment of God’s plan of justice and equality. The church as the body of Christ is responsible to keep the commandments. Marriage is a divine institution, which was established at the time of creation. From that time onwards both the indissolubility of marriage and non-discrimination between the sexes are accustomed. Jesus taught the same thing. Even though the Pharisees tried to catch Jesus, he affirmed the indissolubility and non-discrimination. In order to strengthen the institution of marriage, the

church should be engaged in pre-marital counseling. Without losing the divinity of marriage, the church should find out a remedy for marital breakdown and also try to teach about the equal status of men and women.

Another Theology of Marriage

Marriage, sex and divorce

Historically, marriage has been largely seen as a sociological function, concerned with regulating sex, children, property and inheritance.

The universality of marriage within different societies and cultures is attributed to the many basic social and personal functions it performs, such as procreation and provision for sexual gratification and regulation, care of children and their education and socialization, regulation of lines of descent, division of labour between the sexes, economic production and consumption, and provision for satisfaction of personal needs for affection, status, and companionship. (Barnard 2000)

Early Christian writers from Clement of Alexandria, Tertulian and Augustine saw marriage as a means of controlling sex, which was frequently regarded as belonging to the sinful nature of mankind and therefore evil (Wright 1978 p.86). The purpose of marriage, according to Aquinas, was for procreation, to curb lust and to experience a sacrament (Dever 1978 p.634). Within the church, a general mistrust of sex has often overshadowed the relationship between husband and wife. This in turn has meant that much of the ethical teaching of the church on marriage has placed an emphasis on regulating sex before, outside and after (though generally not within) marriage, and on divorce, rather than the wider aspects of relationships and intimacy.

This emphasis of sexuality has continued until today. For example, Emil Brunner's *Love And Marriage*, published in 1937 through to Adrian Thatcher's *Marriage After Modernity*, published in 1999, have emphasised sexuality over human relationships. This is not to say that relationships have been ignored. As Thatcher (2000 p.661) says, 'A relational understanding of the human person enables sexual desire to be positively experienced and expressed.' However, Thatcher may be interpreted as making relationships a means of enhancing sexual experience rather than sexual intimacy being grounded in a loving relationship.

In an attempt to respond to changing patterns of behaviour there is no longer a consensus as to the place or indeed relevance of marriage within society, leading to a wide variety of attitudes to interpersonal relationships, sex and divorce. Many of these alternatives have proved to be failures, or at least no more successful than that which they sought to replace. Divorce rates remain alarmingly high. Recent research (eg MORI poll, see below) suggests subsequent marriages fail at a higher rate than do first ones. It may be possible to conclude from this that without stable foundations, the whole building appears to have become unstable.

It is not suggested here that there has been no theological reflection on marriage in the past. Through the centuries the church has taken such reflections and developed a number of theologies of marriage. Roman Catholicism has a rigidly defined theology of marriage as

sacrament. Lutherans hold to a theology which makes marriage a rite of the church. Eastern Orthodoxy sees marriage as sacramentally “projected” into the Kingdom of God. Together with Protestantism each has sought to come to terms with marriage and its significance. One recent writer, Jack Dominian (1991 p.6), reflecting from a Catholic viewpoint has commented:

Marriage is the central sacrament of love through which we find God. This does not mean that those who are single, separated, divorced, unloved, cannot find God, or are not in the presence of God – everyone has their way of being in the presence of God – but it does mean that for the married God is found continuously in the neighbour of spouse and in children. In the presence of that love the invisible God becomes visible.

However, this reflection must be continually revisited and built upon if it is to remain relevant.

Marriage and singleness

Although outside the scope of this essay, special consideration must be given to singleness in relation to marriage. Even allowing for Roman Catholic teaching on celibacy, the church has a reputation for viewing marriage as the ‘normal’ state for most men and women, with singleness as a time of waiting for ‘the right person’ to come along. This is not the position of this essay. The New Testament sees both marriage and singleness as equally valid. Both are described by Paul as gifts (1 Corinthians 7:7) with no priority given to one over the other. As Kristin Aune (2002 pp.110f) says:

Because Christians have had an incorrect understanding of the gift of singleness, many see singleness not as a gift but simply as a period of waiting for a partner. Singleness has come to be something Christians seek to get rid of, rather than something they wish to rest in, as Paul advocates. This has led to a preoccupation with finding a partner, and a view that anyone who fails to find someone to marry is just that – a failure. The current imbalance in the number of single Christian men and women has further led women to panic that they will remain ‘left on the shelf’, and men either to become arrogant because they have so many women to choose from, or to withdraw from the church situation entirely because they cannot cope with the pressure placed on them. Viewing singleness simply as a period of waiting to be married is not only unbiblical, it is also unhelpful for both men and women.

Any theology of marriage must be held in tension with a similar theology of singleness.

Definitions of marriage

Before proceeding any further it is necessary to define, tentatively at least, what is meant by marriage. Three definitions, one ethical, one sociological and one theological, are:

- Marriage regulates relations between the sexes in all known forms of society and governs the status and education of children within the community (Waddams 1967 p.206).
- A legally and socially sanctioned union between one or more husbands and one or more wives that accords status to their offspring and is regulated by laws, rules, customs, beliefs, and attitudes that prescribe the rights and duties of the partners (Barnard 2000).
- That lifelong and exclusive state in which a man and a woman are wholly committed to

live with each other in sexual relationship under conditions normally approved and witnessed by their social group or society (Bower and Knapp 1986 vol.3 p.261).

Each of these contribute something to a general understanding of marriage, but none has any apparent theological aspect. However, these definitions may form a starting point in an attempt to arrive at a more holistic approach.

Attitudes to marriage

The history of marriage is a long, involved, subject. Through the ages its basis and interpretation has been tied to various other aspects of life, including religious and ethical beliefs, economics, children, inheritance law, health and life expectancy, the rise of the middle classes, peer pressures, the availability of contraceptives and many others. This has meant that marriage has been a more fluid arrangement than may be expected. Indeed, marriage as it is now thought of in Britain did not exist before 1753, when compulsory registration of marriages, via the church, was first legislated. Before this time it is difficult to generalise on the form and pattern of marriage, even in a relatively uniform society like Britain. Practices varied depending on time, place and social class.

In more recent times an extensive study of family life in a low-income area of London was undertaken by Michael Young and Peter Willmott (1984 and 1986). Their findings suggested that as late as the 1950s, family was centred on the economic separation of the roles of husband and wife, sometimes with both partners working but more frequently with the wife sharing domestic tasks with female relatives who lived nearby. Research repeated in the 1970s showed a change toward what Young and Willmott called the “symmetrical family”, in which the extended family no longer played such a prominent role. Now husbands and wives shared domestic tasks between them. Social activities, too, had become more household-centred. For example, in many cases men stayed home, perhaps to watch television, rather than to socialize with their male friends. Although based in London, these findings were found to be valid throughout Britain (Barnard 2000).

The work of Young and Willmott showed that marriage continued to be a dynamic rather than static institution, open to the pressures of the prevailing culture. As twentieth century wore on and society became more fragmented and diverse, so attitudes to marriage became more complex.

The Biblical Basis for Marriage

The socio-economic background of the Bible makes the institution of marriage very different from today’s understanding. Roland deVaux, in giving a full description of marriage and other family institutions in Old Testament Israel, concludes that the actual practice of marriage largely reflected that of the prevailing customs of the area and time, though modified in the light of Israel’s understanding of their place as the people of God (deVaux 1973 pp.24-38). This distinctiveness is further developed in the New Testament.

Rather than list the Biblical texts that deal with marriage and comment on them ad hoc, a more useful approach might be to apply to Scripture within its own framework. This framework can be

used to analyse many of the questions facing Christians today, including marriage, as it enables the Biblical material to be considered in the light of the four major epochs of heilsgeschichte—that is the Creation, the Fall, Redemption and the Consummation. This allows the text to speak for itself while at the same time acknowledging the cultural and social realities of both then and now.

Creation (Genesis 2:20-25)

God's gift of marriage is part of the original plan and purpose for mankind, dating from before the Fall. Marriage cannot therefore be simply viewed as a means of curbing man's sinful appetites. Genesis tells us that God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (Genesis 2:18). In all of Creation, which God had declared 'good' (1:31) this one thing was 'not good'. Without man and woman in this close relationship, Creation, and God's purposes in and through it, were incomplete. The openness and intimacy of their relationship with one another is summed up in the words, 'the man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame' (2:25). This same openness and intimacy is mirrored in their relationship with God and is marred with the loss of innocence (3:8).

Verse 24 gives the closest the Bible itself comes to a definition of marriage. The triple image of leaving, cleaving and becoming has had a major impact on Christian thinking about marriage. Together they speak of a couple forming a unit, separated from other such units, involved in a process rather than an event. This basic idea would appear to be behind Jesus' words in Matthew 19:3-9. Similarly, Paul expresses the idea of unity and mutuality in 1 Corinthians 11:11f. He goes on to specifically link the teaching of Genesis 2:24 with the relationship between Christ and the Church in Ephesians 5:31f.

Fall (Genesis 3:16f)

As with all other things, the Fall is seen as altering and defacing God's purposes through marriage. An immediate result was the breakdown of the intimacy and trust between man and woman (Genesis 3:7). What had once been a natural out-flowing of a special relationship would now need to be worked at. And like all other things, that effort could go astray. Rules and regulations were now needed to govern, protect and nurture marriage.

Paul says that part of the purpose of these laws was to act as a warden until the time of fulfilment. 'Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith' (Galatians 3:23f). It is in the light of this protection and regulation that we need to understand the law with regards to marriage (see Matthew 19:8).

Compared with other Ancient Near Eastern legal codes (eg the Hammurabi Code, the Ras Shamra (Ugarit) Tablet and various Egyptian codes – see Winton Thomas 1961), the Mosaic Law, which was largely concerned with divorce, its grounds and consequences, and familial relationships, was fair and enlightened. Unfortunately, as many Old Testament stories show, such laws were often abused, to the detriment of marriage in general and women in particular. However, for all its flaws and abuses, God still used marriage as a vehicle for self-revelation (see, for example,

Ezekiel 16 and Hosea 1-3). One might add Song of Songs to this list, though, probably out of embarrassment at the explicit sexuality of this ancient love poem, this is one section of the Bible that has already been over theologised!

Redemption (Ephesians 5:21-33)

There has long been a theological debate on the relationship between Christ and the law. For many, Jesus is to be seen as the fulfilment of the law (Matthew 5:17). Douglas Moo (1984 p.28) says, 'In his direct statements about the law Jesus upholds the continuing validity of the entire Old Testament Scriptures, but also asserts that this validity must be understood in the light of its fulfilment.'

If Christ is the fulfilment of the Law, including marriage, then marriage also finds its fulfilment in him. In Christ, God is working to bring creation back to its original intended state (Romans 8:22ff). As Christ fulfils marriage he transforms it so that once again it reflects God and his plan for it. Jesus' own comments in Mark 10:2-9 point in this direction. Even though mankind still lives in a broken, fallen world, and the image is still marred, through Christ it is redeemed enough so that Paul can use human marriage and sexuality as an illustration of the relationship between Christ and his people, the church. Meanwhile, the writer to the Hebrews indicates that marriage still has an ethical place in the lives of the redeemed fellowship (13:4).

Consummation (Luke 20:34-36)

Speculation about the details of this final state is just that – speculation, but Jesus himself tells us that marriage will be changed at the Parousia. In speaking of the relationship between marriage and the Resurrection (Luke 20:27ff) his exact meaning is unclear. Perhaps he is referring to the Mosaic Law on which he was being questioned at the time, speaking of a re-establishment of the Creation pattern of partners in stewardship of the new creation. Possibly he may be referring to a fuller revelation of the relationship between man and woman to which the Creation model is itself just a reflection. It is however clear that in responding to the Sadducees' question in this way, Jesus shows that the arrival of the Age to Come will mark a reorientation of human relationships.

As the context of this passage shows, this reorientation will mean a radical shift from common understanding. The Sadducees' question, apart from its presuppositions regarding the Resurrection, makes assumptions about the basis for marriage, that is, to carry on the male line. Jesus' answer points to the original idea behind marriage, that of companionship. Equal relationship, indicated by the use of the middle voice in verse 35 (not 'given in marriage' but rather 'to allow oneself to be married') is to be the basis of marriage, not any other consideration.

Towards a theology of marriage

Moving from consideration of the Biblical material to theological reflection on marriage from the perspective of God's nature, covenant, his purposes and revelation suggests there is a spiritual foundation to marriage. Marriage, far from being a social, cultural, economic or legal response to a set of locally occurring circumstances, is deeply theological.

Marriage and God's nature

Fundamental to the Christian understanding of God's nature is the concept of relationship, expressed not only in the Trinity but also in the knowability of God and the possibility of human-divine communion. This communion, reflected in all human relationships, particularly in marriage, is used by Scripture in a unique way to illustrate something of the nature of God.

In the Old Testament God uses the husband-wife image to illustrate his own relationship with Israel. God is a compassionate, patient husband even in time of great stress and provocation. His sacrificial love for his chosen bride has no limits and is without qualification. The Old Testament declaration of faith, 'The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin' (Exodus 34:6f, see also Nehemiah 9:17 and Psalm 86:15) contains one of the highest statements on the love of God. These words are read alongside such passages as Hosea 1-3, which deals with an adulterous partner, together with 1 Corinthians 7 and Ephesians 5, which set ground-rules for Christian marriage.

Marriage and God's covenant

A second link, particularly in the Old Testament, is between marriage and covenant. God's relationship with his people is often described in covenant terms, and these same terms are used of marriage. God's covenant with Israel is itself described in marriage terms, particularly in the prophets (eg Isaiah 54:6; 62:4; Jeremiah 3:1; Ezekiel 16:32; Hosea 1:2ff and Malachi 2:11-14). David Atkinson (1979 pp.75f) points out the correlation between marriage and God's covenant, stating a number of similarities: an initiative of love, inviting a response, and so creating a relationship; a vow of consent, guarding the union against the fitfulness of emotion; obligations of faithfulness; the promise of blessing to those who are faithful to their covenant obligations; and sacrifice.

In establishing his covenant with Israel, God made certain promises. Foremost amongst these were the promises to both protect and provide for his people. In return they would remain faithful to God, 'forsaking all others'. Sacrificial love and inter-dependence are seen both in God's covenant relationship with his people and in marriage.

Marriage and God's purposes

According to Colossian 1:15-23, God's purpose is to bring reconciliation to a broken, segregated world. God's original stated intention for marriage was that a man and a woman should be complete in one another. Marriage, it would seem, can also reflect something of God's reconciling work.

This bringing together in fellowship and inter-dependence is seen most clearly in the use of the bride image as applied to the church (2 Corinthians 11:2 and Revelation 21:2). The church-bride is elected to God's purpose but is free to make a choice. Christ in love gives himself to establish a covenant relationship with his one bride. Christ's atonement is seen as a betrothal gift. Christ's love cleanses and makes the bride worthy of him. These actions are reflected in Paul's instructions to husbands and wives in Ephesians 5:21ff. Here the basis of submissive love is found in Christ's love for his bride.

Finally, God's ultimate purpose, the re-creation of the whole cosmos, is seen in terms of a marriage celebration (cf Revelation 19:7), often referred to as the Consummation, a term with strong sexual overtones.

Marriage and revelation

Marriage may be seen as both the message and the medium of God's revelation. God's nature, covenant and purposes are revealed primarily through Scripture. Although they may be experienced through marriage in a way that adds to their depth, it is questionable whether without Scripture their significance would be understood. By knowing God through his self-revelation in Scripture it is possible to come to know more of his purposes for, in and through marriage. In the words of the marriage service as set out in the Anglican Alternative Service Book 1980, 'The Scriptures teach us that marriage is a gift of God in creation and a means of grace.' Marriage is seen as a revealed truth, given by God, and as a means by which we may further experience God.

Redefining marriage

Theology often gives the impression of being driven by society's agenda. This is inevitable if the church is to answer questions actually being asked by society. As has been shown above, attitudes regarding marriage within society in general have become fragmented and diverse and the church has found it difficult to make a clear response. The drawback to this situation is a temptation to rationalise.

On the one hand, there are those who have failed to draw a distinction between the essentials of a Biblical view of marriage and the cultural accretions that surround modern marriages. They tend to see marriage in legalistic terms. A man who shows no love, or even respect, for his wife will be more acceptable, provided he has a marriage certificate, than a couple in a long-term, loving, stable relationship who have forgone a wedding. On the other hand, there are those who risk losing any Christian distinctiveness in their approach. For them life-style, including marriage, has been privatised and the church is seen as having no right nor wish to comment. In this case there is a risk that pragmatism and expediency become the driving forces behind their response. In discussing a Biblical approach to marriage and the purpose of God, it was seen that a principle aim of marriage was to complete that which was incomplete. Through it he intended that men and women should experience something unique, not just about themselves but also about God and their relationship to him; in other words, God intended marriage to have a spiritual aspect. It is this spiritual dimension that is apparently missing from the above definitions. Drawing on the third of the definitions it will now be noted that each of its clauses has strong theological overtones:

- The parallels between marriage and covenant indicate that God intended marriage to be lifelong and exclusive. This raises issues regarding divorce and faithfulness which must be considered in the light of this conclusion. The Mosaic Law, which was designed to protect women from the abuses of a harsh society, may have allowed divorce because of 'the hardness of your hearts' (Matthew 19:8) but it was seen as an aberration of God's purposes by both Jesus and Paul. The church is to allow for failure, forgiveness and restoration in

this as in any other area of life, but a clear standard is set.

- God's original design was that both members of a marriage should be completed by their complimentary relationship with the other. It is particularly significant that in a society that gave a higher priority to same-sex friendships than marriage (eg David and Jonathan as opposed to David and any of his wives) the Creation story provides a woman for the man. While affirming single-sex friendships, marriage is to be between a man and a woman. This has wider implications than simply regulating against single-sex marriages. It touches on the basic psychology and needs of both sexes. The Creation story sees man and woman as equal but different, separate from but needing one another.
- Being wholly committed to one another reflects God's commitment to his people. This refers not to the permanent and exclusive relationship mentioned above but to attitudes within marriage. Marriage is not an external relationship, similar to a business partnership. It is a commitment to one another that seeks the benefit of the other. Atkinson, quoted above, uses the word 'sacrificial' to define this commitment. Such an attitude will have a direct bearing on many of the situations that bring couples for marriage counselling, and will affect the way the church responds to related questions in wider society.
- The reference to a sexual relationship should be amended to a loving relationship, emphasising the place of love and intimacy in marriage, of which sexual intimacy may be a result. This distinction has an effect on the church's approach to sexual ethics. The Bible uses the image of sexual intimacy to reflect the relationship between God and his people. If the image is to maintain its meaning then the sexual act must not be separated from the loving relationship, and the link between love and sex needs to be maintained. Dominian's comment above draws our attention to the loving relationship to be experienced by couples. It is sustaining, nurturing, healing love that makes it possible for each to experience God's love as well as one another's.
- The final condition is that a couple live with each other... under conditions normally approved and witnessed by their social group or society includes many of the issues raised by the other definitions. In particular this clause speaks of openness, reflecting God's visible commitment to his people. Again, this clause is foundational to areas other than marriage, for if the marriage relationship is public, reflecting God's openness with his people, then the people in turn are open in all their relationships.

It would appear from the above that there is a theological basis to marriage that takes it beyond sociological considerations. Bringing this theology to bear on many of the questions confronting the church today may open new ways of exploring old problems. By further developing and reflecting on this theology of marriage it will be possible to respond to John Stott's call to take a more Biblical approach to marriage (Stott 1984 pp.274-277). In particular he calls for a recognition of the relationship between marriage and reconciliation, thus placing marriage at the heart of the Christian message.

As an example, the above may be applied to those couples where one or both are previously divorced who wish a church wedding. The debate over the remarriage of divorcees continues in the church, but if the norm for Christian marriage is to be a lifelong commitment such a practice

might seem to be excluded. But the permanence in marriage is not arbitrary, but is based on a reflection of God's covenant. A mark of this covenant is mercy, reconciliation and restoration. Such a view recognises that divorce is a failure of a relationship and falls short of the norm. But covenant love always leaves a way to return to relationship through repentance and forgiveness. One possible practice would be to require, as part of any remarriage service, a declaration of repentance by the divorced person made as publicly as the original marriage vows. Such a declaration is to be dealt with in a sensitive manner, but by taking such a route the importance of marriage is upheld and those hurt by past relationships are allowed to follow a path to recovery.

Scripture sees marriage as more than a socio-cultural mechanism for regulating property, inheritance, children and women. These aspects are, to one extent or another, undoubtedly present, and often reflect the attitudes of the day, but there is more. What has become apparent is that there is a thread running throughout Scripture which shows that marriage had a significance apart from and beyond the prevailing culture.

5.9. Give examples from modern Zambian life of loyalty to the Kingdom of God conflicting with family loyalty

Women involved in Church leadership and activities sometimes face this problem. They have a difficult time to decide between being with family or going to Church. Men equally have a difficult time to decide between going for Church programs or going to work and bring food home. Not all women or men face these problems though.

5.10. Compare Christian behaviour in such cases with the behaviour of people loyal to one of the three other main religious traditions in Zambia.

It is not so much of an institution teaching; sometimes it is just a personal commitment. This kind of life can happen in any of the other three main religious traditions in Zambia.

5.11. Identify factors in modern Zambia which damage family life and show what the Christian attitude should be to each of these factors.

Though not the list is not comprehensive, but these are some of the factors that damage family life in modern Zambia:

- a. Prolonged working hours
- b. Overemphasis on the Church at the expense of family
- c. Sexuality
- d. Economic hardships
- e. Faulty marital foundation
- f. Lack of communication
- g. Monies
- h. Prolonged absence from home

Revision Questions

1. Show how Jesus by his words and his behaviour, taught that obedience to the Kingdom of God must be valued above loyalty to one's family.
2. State the teachings of Jesus about marriage and divorce and compare them with Old Testament teachings and the teachings of Jesus' contemporaries
3. Compare Christian behaviour in such cases with the behaviour of people loyal to one of the three other main religious traditions in Zambia.
4. Identify factors in modern Zambia which damage family life and show what the Christian attitude should be to each of these factors.